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ONLY FOOLS GO TO AMERICA

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THAT was the year I learned to know my grandmother, and also learned that only fools go to America. I was nine then, and all that spring I had been sick.

Besides my being sick, the spring was mainly notable for four things: the storks did n't come back, an American in bear-skin coat and yellow shoes arrived, my grandmother opened up a saloon, and the same grandmother gave me a huge, beautiful accordion. However, she played the accordion herself and only let me have it Saturday evenings; Sundays, too, of course, but on Sundays one did n't play accordions — one went to church and was solemn.

I was sick so long. When by May the storks had n't yet arrived some fisherwomen told my mother it was n't pneumonia at all I suffered from; it was a visitation of the evil one. I was bewitched. The failure of the storks to return augured nothing but evil. Mother explained to them, so that I could hear it, that the storks had been drowned in the Mediterranean by a terrific storm during their spring migration. But the fisherwomen bobbed their heads grimly, unbelieving, and studied me pityingly.

Certainly it was a memorable year; later four fishermen were drowned, a small whale drifted to the dike, and the school board decided to drop the teaching of English in our day school because the English fishing fleet had come within a mile of our Dutch coast and hauled away all the herring.

In my mind, however, the matters of greatest importance were the storks, the American, the accordion, and Grandmother's saloon. All those combined to make that one afternoon in late June unforgettable. It was warm, the sea winds were balmy, and the sheep on the dike — delivered of their lambs again — lay still; the fishing fleet was out and all the land workers were in the fields. Mother had decided I might go out that afternoon, if I stayed in the sun. 'But don't get your feet wet, and don't catch crabs, and don't try running after weasels between the basalt blocks of the dike,' she warned.

'May n't I visit Grandmother in her saloon?' I pleaded.

She frowned and said, 'It's a sin — an old woman of her station having a saloon! No, you may n't.'

'Maybe she'll let me have my accor-

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dion. I'll play it on the dike, in the sun,' I persisted warily.

'Like as not she's playing it herself, there in that drinking place,' she said severely. 'Your accordion!' she snorted. 'Saturday nights when you're ready for bed, that's when it's yours.'

I understood Mother's attitude toward Grandmother, of course. I took it for granted. It was part of the long feud between them, simply because Father had married below his station. Grandmother and her four unmarried daughters had never forgiven and forgotten. I knew I had to be patient, and being sick helped. 'But, Mother, she'll let me have it this afternoon — the first time I'm out.'

She shook her head wearily. 'I doubt it. But —' She looked behind my ears. 'Before you go out, go and wash yourself, so those four shan't find anything —' She stopped abruptly. I knew that Father did n't like to have her talk about his sisters when my brothers and I were within earshot. 'Go and wash yourself well. I'm going to the kitchen to see what Trijntje is doing. When you're done, call me.'

Perhaps it was worth it. But I'd have to dress up, too, because I'd have to come down the front stoop bright, clean, and shiny. And as soon as the door of our house opened, the curtains of the three huge windows in the old house across the street would be pushed gently aside, and the four pale faces of the aunts would peer out, and Mother would nod brightly at them — though sometimes she muttered words which did n't at all fit her smiles — and I would cross the street, march through the wicket, walk between the tulip beds, and wait in front of Grandmother's door till one of my aunts opened it. Then all four aunts in the large front room would inspect me, straighten my tie, pull up my stockings, brush my hair, tell me I should n't drawl, I should n't droop my shoulders, I should n't walk with my hands in my pockets. . . . 'And

thank goodness, your mother did n't make you wear wooden shoes.'

I was a little afraid of them, but I liked them, too. They were pale and beautiful, and wore Parisian clothes. Also, a neighbor had said to Mother, 'They are more to be pitied than scorned — because they'll never marry below their station, and there are no men for them in town.' They smelled lovely, they were stately, they acted wonderfully subdued; they were pale and immensely genteel.

II

Washing myself, I remembered last March, before I had taken sick, before we knew that the storks were n't coming back. It was on a Sunday, and because I was all dressed up, even to leather shoes, Father allowed me to visit Grandmother. None of my brothers ever did; they were afraid of her. But because I had skinned my knuckles the previous day, playing marbles, I decided it was better not to face my aunts.

I had to run around the side of Grandmother's long house, around the boat-building shop and the piles of pungent lumber, to the back door, which faced the quay of the canal. I opened the door without calling 'Folk,' because I knew where to find Grandmother. Along the long green-tiled back passage I trod as softly as my shoes allowed me, so that my aunts would n't hear. Then, opening the last door quietly, I peered in and saw Grandmother sitting in her high-backed chair, the gray cat imperturbable at her side. Equally imperturbable, Grandmother said to me, 'Well, Rim, can't you say "Good day" to your grandmother?'

'Good day, Grandmother,' I said, waiting dutifully.

'Sit down there.' She pointed to the chair beside the geraniums.

I obeyed. I saw that she had removed the golden helmet she had worn to church that morning. She'd even removed all the caps, including the skull-

cap, and she sat there somewhat grotesque in her short-cropped gray hair. I gazed, and she said dryly, 'Don't look so funny. I'll cover it up.' Taking a white cap from the knob of her chair, she put it on. 'There, is that better?'

I nodded, and waited. Her bright black eyes twinkled. 'You're a funny boy, Rim,' she said.

All was well. I relaxed. One never knew what mood she'd be in. That was the reason people were afraid of her, even Father. And my name was n't Rim, of course. She called me Rim because that had been her father's name, and she said I was of her blood, and I ought to have been named Rim. Not my younger brother, whom she did n't like. So she called me Rim, stubbornly, except when I displeased her. Then she called me by my own name and made it sound extremely nasty.

I saw she was thinking, and waited for her to speak again. I studied the pictured tiles above the fireplace, then the window in the door beside Grandmother's chair. Through it she watched the workshop, to supervise the men who worked there—every day, since Grandfather had died, and in spite of Father.

From sheer habit she sat there Sundays too, when the shop was closed. 'It's a sin,' Mother said. But there she sat. She never sewed or knitted, like other women. Unexpectedly she said, 'Well, Rimke, so you've come to sit with Grandmother awhile.'

'Yes, Beppe,' I said.

Also unlike other women she sat there without her tea. Except for its red cloth the little square table was bare. 'With four daughters running the house, what's the use of my making a fuss?' she'd explain often. She hated housework. But all this time she was watching me steadily, so steadily that I had to look at the tiles again. 'Rim,' she demanded, 'do you think I'm an old woman and done for?'

I was taken by surprise and hesitated. 'I don't think you're done for,' I said diplomatically.

'But I'm old—is n't that right?' She chuckled—five dry little coughs, the way she always chuckled. 'You're a bright boy, Rim. You're my own blood. Now, look: what would you say if I opened up a saloon?'

I did n't dare gasp. Women did n't run saloons; old women did n't, especially not dignified old women like Grandmother—the best family in town. But if she wanted to do it, no one could stop her anyway. 'It'd be nice, Grandmother,' I said quietly.

She chuckled again. 'No, it won't be nice, but . . . Well, I don't see why I should sit here twiddling my thumbs. I'm not done for, and the four girls . . .' She left the sentence unfinished, and chuckled.

Then I recalled that I had heard Father talking to Mother about Grandmother wanting a saloon. At the time it had n't been anything real and Mother had exclaimed, 'But that's a sin!' That in my opinion had settled it. Evidently it had n't. Troubled, I asked, 'But is n't that a sin, Grandmother?'

'It's no sin to make money, to find use for idle hands, to give fools what they'd get elsewhere, is it, Rim?' she asked sharply.

'No, Beppe,' I said.

Then we sat in silence again. I was thinking that it was Sunday and Grandmother ought n't to be thinking about saloons—only about sacred things. I looked at her and saw that her face was severe, and her thin lips were slightly pursed, and her black eyes stood fixed. She was thinking.

'Rim,' she said abruptly, 'I'm going to give you an accordion. A big one. You'd like that, would n't you?'

In my complete surprise I answered, 'Yes, Grandmother.'

'Fine, boy,' she nodded approvingly. 'I'll teach you to play it.'

'Yes, Beppe,' I said, still amazed. I

had never thought of having an accordion. 'Thank you, Grandmother.'

'You're a boy of my own flesh,' she said brusquely. Suddenly she unclasped the huge leather purse she always carried tied around her waist, dug her hand into it, and extracted a silver gulden. 'Do you want it?' she asked.

I shook my head. It was too much. I could n't conceive of accepting it.

'You don't?' She laughed and dropped it back in the purse. 'You're a wise boy. I would have given it to you. But you're wise, Rim. Never accept more than what you can use. You know the value of money. Now run along and let Grandmother think.'

I had run down the long cool back passage, over the quay, up the dike, to stand in the March winds, wondering why I had n't accepted that gulden.

III

I was through washing; my ears tingled, my face glowed. I waited for Mother to inspect me. In the mirror I saw that I was clean but pale. I had been sick so long, and in the meanwhile Grandmother had opened her saloon — one room for men, tended by a barmaid, another part for women, which she ran herself. And in May the storks had n't yet returned, but the American had come — even before Grandmother had bought the accordion, which she played herself and let me have only on Saturday nights. Somehow I sensed that she had wanted it for herself all the time — that this was perhaps the only sanctioned way she could have got it. When I was still too weak to be up, she'd come and sit beside my bed and play the tunes she had learned. She promised to teach me all of them. But she never mentioned the saloon. And Mother said she'd better not, and Father looked severe when Mother mentioned it, and I heard that my four aunts acted even more remote and disdainful.

And then the American in his bearskin

coat and yellow shoes arrived in town, and everybody talked about him, and my uncle told Father that they ought to put the American in a wheelbarrow and push him into the canal. I could n't learn why. He was n't a real American, actually, because he had been in America only five years, and his old father lived on a canalboat just out of town. But my brothers said the American told wonderful stories.

I sat waiting for Mother to inspect me, thinking of the American now. I had seen him pass our windows, wearing his huge coat even now in June, when it was warm. But my brothers said I ought to hear him talk about Chicago, where the buildings were so high they had snow on them even in summer, and about cars (to us cars were simply dogcarts or pushcarts) that traveled on high tracks for miles and miles over roof tops for only a nickel. I pictured myself scooting over roof tops, alone in a little cart. But the American . . . he sat every afternoon on the dike steps telling stories. Maybe I'd speak to him this afternoon.

At last Mother came and approved of me. She made me put on the tight English breeches, long black stockings, leather shoes, a blue blouse, and a stiff Eton collar. She tied my tie over and over again. 'But you're so pale,' she said, inspecting me again. 'As pale as they are themselves. Maybe it'll please them.'

'Maybe I'll see the American on the dike,' I said.

'Don't you go to the dike in those clothes,' she said angrily. 'After you've seen your aunts and grandmother come back and change your clothes. Put on your wooden shoes. I'll let you out the back way.' Then she added: 'And I don't want you to talk to that American. At least not till the other children are out of school.'

'Yes, Mother,' I answered.

Then she peered through the curtains at Grandmother's house. She gasped,

'Well, if I'd known that!' I saw what she meant. Lined along the white picket fence stood the four bicycles of my aunts. They were going cycling, in their own stately way, very likely to show off some new Parisian riding costume. 'If I'd known that,' Mother repeated, 'I would n't have bothered dressing you all up. Now you run over there before they leave, or I've done it all for nothing.'

It would have been more fun to stay there and watch them emerge from the other house in their new clothes, stand poised on their grass plot awhile as if they were on a stage, pivot this way and that for anyone to see, and then mount their bicycles in their corseted, benign way. 'You'd better hurry,' Mother said.

But even Mother was anxious to see those new costumes. In spite of her protests she was always at the window when my four aunts came out in their new clothes, copied from French fashion books and sewed by themselves. There were none like them in town. And Mother and the neighbors, too, always seemed to sense when they'd emerge in something new. My aunts, of course, pretended they did n't know they were being watched.

Only two weeks ago they had shown themselves in their new summer dresses. They had stood on the grass, peering in fashion-plate style at the peonies. Then, unexpectedly, the American had come along. They had acted as if they were unaware of him, posing in frozen attitudes over the peonies. He had stopped dead still, his mouth agape above the enormous fur collar. Mother had thrown herself on a chair, shrieking with laughter.

I crossed the street. This time I had to cry 'Folk!' in front of Grandmother's door before two of my aunts came to open it. They were gorgeous: large hats, flowing veils. They walked in auras of scents. They drifted around, preening, inspecting each other. They had hardly time for me, but mechani-

cally their fingers adjusted my tie three times, brushed my hair, and they exclaimed over me in preoccupied voices until I asked, 'Where is Grandmother?'

My eldest aunt said curtly, 'She's not at home.' The others nodded.

I knew that Grandmother was in the saloon at the back of the long rambling house. I knew, too, that my aunts never mentioned that saloon, ignored it.

'Oh,' I said.

'You must n't say "oh,"' my second aunt said. 'And you must n't put your hands in your pockets.'

I decided to find my grandmother. They were so busy with themselves they did n't even notice my leaving. Down the long silent hall, with all its burnished doors, I walked in delicate scents. Not till I came to the back room where Grandmother always sat watching the workshop did those scents mix with those of rope, apples, tar, cheese, pine — pungent smells that grew stronger the closer I came to the workshop.

I entered the long workshop and saw that it was swept clean. It was summer, and the men were outdoors building, of course. One partly completed dory was perched atop three wooden horses, and in a corner on a pile of new wood shavings the old caretaker lay napping. Grandmother's barmaid slept there too during slack hours, my brothers had told me. The workshop was bright and silent. The caretaker snored gently.

Across a little flagstone court, flush with the quay, was the saloon, in the remodeled supply house. After I had pushed the door open I stood still with awe, and looked at the bright bar, at bottles upon bottles, and sniffed tart and thick odors. I stared at the old fisherman in one corner and then at the big barmaid who stood watching me. I saw a smile spread over her face. 'Oh, I guess I know you!' she cried, leaning her elbows on the bar, wagging her head. 'My, my, my, you do look like something cut out of paper.'

I blushed and was silent.

'Your grandmother is in the woman's part.' She indicated a corner door. 'You are a pretty boy, but my, you must have been sick.'

'Yes,' I said, hurrying through the corner door.

There I stopped again, gazing in amazement at Grandmother, who stood there in full costume, wearing her Frisian gold helmet and all the lace caps, the Frisian dress, all her cornelian jewelry and gold chains. And she stood there wagging her head at me, tapping the big leather purse at her side. 'Och, Rimke,' she exclaimed, 'you're up, and come to see Grandmother in her saloon! But how pale you are!'

'Good afternoon, Grandmother,' I said, uneasy in this new setting.

There was no one there besides her. Here too were bright bottles, little tables, a very small bar. But there were curtains at the window and geraniums in red painted pots, and the gray cat between them. Grandmother asked: 'Rim, what do you think of my saloon? You know, you and I planned it together,' she chuckled, patting my cheek.

'Beautiful,' I said.

'But no place for you, Rim. Only fools come here. You'll never become a drunkard, will you, Rim?'

'Oh no,' I said dutifully.

'That's right. You're my own blood.' She shook her head vigorously. 'This is no place for you, Rim. But if you feel like visiting your grandmother here, you come through that door, see?' She pointed at another door that opened into the workshop. 'See, that's the way the ladies come. The fools!' she snorted. 'All those nice ladies who hide their bottles under their skirts, and sit here, making believe they came to talk to me. They come through the shop, Rim, because they want to make believe they're not coming here at all.'

She led me to the window, which faced a side street. I could see the church roof and the empty wagon wheel on top of it, with only a few twigs left of last year's

stork nest. 'They did n't come back. They were drowned in the Mediterranean, were n't they?' I said.

She bobbed her head and inspected me. 'But, boy, how pale you are! You ought to be in the sun. But why are you wearing those tight things? You need air.'

'I have to run back and change when my aunts are gone,' I explained, then thought perhaps I should n't have said that.

She chuckled. 'Oh, that's it! But you — go to the dike, in some roomy clothes you can grow in, and sit in the sun,' she commanded.

It was better not to tell her that Mother had already suggested that, but to let her think it was her own idea. 'Yes, Grandmother.'

'Have they started yet?' she asked.

I knew she meant my aunts. 'Almost,' I said.

'It'll do them good. They need some air and sunshine.'

'Yes,' I answered doubtfully, remembering the large hats and the veils.

Suddenly I spied the accordion on a shelf. 'Grandmother, may I have my accordion and play it in the sun?'

She shook her head. 'No, Rim. Grandmother is going to practise on it. Saturday you get it.' Then she added: 'But look, I'll play it for you.' She reached for the accordion. 'And you sing. That one about the boy who goes to sea and makes five guildens and thinks he can buy the queen's palace.'

She started playing, leaning against the bar. But the fringes and ruffs on her lace caps bothered her. Impatiently she pulled them off, even the filigree cap, and stood in the smooth glittering gold helmet, chuckling. She played, I sang. The barmaid came and stood in the doorway and sang too. But when the old fisherman also came, she pushed him back. We sang the song seven times, and each time it was better. Even Grandmother sang in the end. When she stopped she said, 'It's a fine instrument you have,

Rimke,' closing the accordion and patting it.

'Ah, wonderful,' the barmaid said.

At that moment shadows skimmed across the window. I looked and saw my aunts pass on their bicycles, never looking aside at the bar window. Grandmother watched them also. 'They're not going to get any sun in those fancy bonnets,' she protested. She turned to me: 'Well, you're going to get some anyway. Run home and tell your mother that I said you can't go on the dike in those silly English panties. Tell her I said you need room and sun. Put on your wooden shoes.'

The accordion stood on the bar and Grandmother returned to it, and started unclasping it. There was no use asking her. I ran home.

IV

When I came out of the house again, on wooden shoes, in wide corduroy breeches and velvet jacket, too warm for this warm day, I decided to go to the dike at once, and sit there in the sun. Perhaps Grandmother would let me have the accordion if she saw me sitting there alone.

The quay was silent, the canal lay without a ripple. The town was empty. Two old women sat silently knitting near the inn, watching two sleeping babies. The sun stood high, pigeons swayed high, but the sheep on the dike were half asleep and chewed lackadaisically, staring with patient gray eyes toward the sea. There was a long stretch of beach over which crabs wandered and shore birds waddled.

I sat on the dike in the warm sun, between the scattered sheep. The roofs were red and peaceful, no chimney smoked, but on the roof tops the stork nests were empty wagon wheels. It meant evil, the old folks said. Beneath me, steeped in sun, I could see the bar-room, and sometimes Grandmother's golden helmet glittering momentarily in the sun. Because I watched the saloon so

closely I never noticed that the American had come from the sea side of the dike toward me. Not till four sheep scudded away did I see him.

He smiled at me and I saw his several gold teeth. I looked at his fur coat, unbuttoned now, showing a wrinkled blue serge suit. I saw the yellow shoes, and I did n't like his voice when he said, 'Well, well, little boy, who are you? Why are n't you in school?'

'I am sick,' I explained primly, and added: 'And that's my grandmother's saloon.'

'Oh, it is, is it?' he said. I realized that he did n't talk as I thought an American should talk. He talked like all the villagers.

I nodded, my eyes on his coat. 'Is n't that coat terribly hot?'

'It's terribly cold in America,' he said perfunctorily. 'So your grandma has a saloon,' he added, bending toward me, flashing his gold teeth. 'Look, little boy, you can do something for me. Look, if you go to your grandma's saloon and get me a bottle marked *jenever*, — a full one, mind you, — I'll do something for you.'

'I can't do that. I —'

'Oh yes, you can,' he said. 'Oh yes. You just go in there and when your grandma is n't looking you put it under your jacket and come back here.' He tugged at my jacket.

'I can't,' I pleaded, trying to rise from the grass because his yellow shoes were prodding me. I wanted to call for help, but he and his wide coat were between me and the saloon. Then, because his shoes kept digging into me, I backed down the sea side of the dike.

'Why can't you?' he demanded. 'In America when a man tells a boy to do something, he does it. Or he . . .' He twisted his hand. 'You know what, don't you? And look, I'll give you this.' He showed me a coin.

'No!' I cried, almost mute with fear, for he was slowly following me down the dike.

But at that very moment I became aware of the glittering gold helmet rising over the slope of the dike. I saw my grandmother, her angry face, her cornelians sparkling, her one arm clutching the folded accordion to her side, the other gesticulating. The American turned and saw her and started to edge away.

'Don't you dare move a step!' my grandmother cried at him. She came closer, swinging the accordion now. 'I saw you. I saw you threatening the poor boy,' she said, while he backed away from her. 'Stand still,' she commanded, 'you rat!' I realized then why men were afraid of her.

'What did he want, Rim?' she demanded.

'He wanted me to get a bottle from your saloon,' I cried.

'Oh, he did, did he? So that's the game, you —' She stopped. 'Now I'll tell you a few things!' But suddenly she looked at me. 'Here, Rim,' she shouted, 'go on top of the dike and play that!' She thrust the accordion into my hands. 'Play it, because I don't want you to hear what I'm going to tell this rat, and I can't lower my voice.'

Frightened, I ran to the top of the dike and unclasped the accordion. I could think of nothing to play but the 'Friesch Volkslied.' I started playing it, wildly, full of mistakes, the heavy accordion pinching my jacket, my hands clumsy. At the barroom door I saw the barmaid restraining the old fisherman. But on the other slope of the dike my small grandmother in all her finery was gesticulating, telling the American things. He was still backing away from her. I could n't hear what she said. I played on, madly; started over again when I was done.

At last the American was running along the foot of the dike, over the basalt stones. And Grandmother was returning, slapping her hands together. I stopped playing. For a moment she stood glowering. 'You were n't afraid of

him, were you?' she demanded. 'But no, you were n't. You're sick, poor boy. No flesh and blood of mine is ever afraid.'

Suddenly she laughed, watching my face, seeing me hug the wide-open accordion. 'What were you playing? I forgot to listen, but it was good.'

I told her. 'Oh, it was fine,' she said proudly. 'You're a brave boy and you can play. Play it again,' she commanded.

I sat down on the land side of the dike and started playing. She was watching me, forgetting it was undignified to stand there in her bare gold helmet without ruffs and laces, tapping her foot to my playing. I played much better. 'You're a brave boy,' she said. 'Now let me try it.'

She played, and I saw the barmaid laughing from the saloon door. The two old women near the inn were staring, but Grandmother was unaware of them. Over the accordion she watched the American run. Suddenly she turned and stopped playing. 'I see business coming,' she said, indicating two women walking along the quay, dignified, to all intents going anywhere but to the bar. 'Yes, Rim, it's business. Now you sit in the sun and get warm.' She hustled down the dike steps, folding the accordion shut.

I sat in the sun. I watched the two women enter the boat-shop door. It was warm and lovely. Slowly the sheep were rising and starting to nibble. The canals were blue bars in green, and little white clouds were in them. I had almost forgotten the American. Then, from the far-distant humming and the silver flickering of very far away gulls, I knew that the tide was coming in. Sometimes I could actually hear the gulls. I had n't seen the tide come in for so long. Suddenly I decided to go down on the beach and build a sand and clay town and watch the tide flood it. I might get wet feet — and I might even try to catch some crabs.

I labored lovingly, wholly preoccupied. The humming of the tide grew louder, the gull cries came clearly now. Already the hurried little winds came rushing ahead of the tide. My town grew; I built the walls higher, stronger. It was perched between an eddy and a black soggy square in the gray clay. I knew those black squares were places where the fishermen had dug deep for seaworms. It was dangerous to walk on them, for I'd sink over my head in the black slush. But I knew it was a fine place near which to build my town, for the water would come out of the eddy and out of the black hole, like armies from two sides. The tide rumbled.

V

I had not heard him come, I had seen no shadow. Suddenly there was the yellow shoe standing on the wall of my town, crushing it, then the other shoe kicking the town apart. I did n't cry; I only rose. It was n't fear yet that I felt; it was anger and helplessness. When he took hold of my ear and twisted it and said, 'Do you know what they do to squealers in America?' I shrieked with pain. And when he put his fingers around my neck and said, 'And this,' I struck at his gold teeth and broke away from him.

I backed away toward the eddy, seeing only the awful yellow shoes following. It was n't fear yet. Desperately I glanced up toward the top of the dike. I saw my grandmother standing there, the sun sharp on her gold helmet, her arms at her sides, watching.

Then it did n't become fear. It was n't courage, either. It seemed only that those silly shoes were never meant to be there where the clay was wet and soft. When I backed around the corner of the black square where the clay was even wetter and softer, I did n't think I'd led him there intentionally. But the yellow shoes sank away, and he fell, while the blue-black clay oozed and

bubbled and his huge fur coat flopped over him.

I ran up the dike, unevenly over the basalt blocks, then stumbling among scurrying sheep. I threw myself against my grandmother, and not till then did I realize she was laughing. She pressed my head against her. 'You're not afraid, are you, Rim?' she laughed.

Then I looked down and saw the American in the deep clay, threshing, sinking deeper. Farther back the tide rumbled. But Grandmother laughed. 'He's going down!' I cried.

'Hush, boy,' she said. 'You're brave. You're my kin.'

I stood there petrified, watching the man struggle in the black mud. Suddenly Grandmother took my hand and led me over the top of the dike. 'Come with me. Let's forget him,' she said. 'And I can't leave those women alone in my bar.' She pulled me firmly along.

'But the American!' I cried.

'Hush, don't mention him,' she said. 'Don't mention him again.'

I followed her into the saloon, where the two women sat sipping. They giggled when they saw me. I was uneasy. We could n't leave that man there. The tide was coming. 'He'll drown!' I cried.

'Don't mention him again,' Grandmother said.

The women giggled and wanted me to sip from their glasses. 'Don't be fools,' Grandmother scolded them.

I sat watching them. I looked at Grandmother in amazement — her calm, her unconcern. Her face was n't even stern. I felt I had to talk. Through the window I saw the forsaken wagon wheel on the church. 'Grandmother, why did n't the storks come back?'

'They were drowned,' she said briefly.

'Grandmother, did the American come because the storks did n't come back? Does that mean evil?'

'I should n't be a bit surprised,' she chuckled.

One of the women opened her eau-de-

cologne box and wanted to sponge my forehead. 'No, Tjet,' Grandmother commanded.

I could no longer be still. 'The tide! Let's go and look.'

'Not yet,' she answered.

'When, Grandmother?'

'We'll give him plenty of time to choke, or plenty of time to crawl out and get away,' she said loftily. Then she thrust the accordion into my hands. 'Play for the ladies,' she said.

I played. It made me feel better. The women tapped their feet and then danced. Their steps did n't fit my music, but it did n't matter. It made the music go faster. But Grandmother stood aside, aloof and very dignified. 'That's enough,' she said presently. 'You've had enough,' she said to the women.

They tittered and went out, through the workshop. 'The fools!' Grandmother said.

'Let's look now,' I pleaded.

She took my hand. 'We'll carry the accordion with us,' she said.

I could n't understand how she could think of the accordion. I could hardly get there fast enough, but she was slow and dignified. 'Rats never drown,' she said.

'Why is he a rat, Grandmother?'

'There are some things too dirty to put in your mouth, Rim.'

We were on top of the dike. We looked down; there was no one there. The black hole lay silent, seeped level again. The tide had n't yet reached it. I clutched her hand. 'He's gone!' I wailed.

'Come with me,' she said. We descended the dike. I smelled the fetid black clay the American had stirred up. She pointed at the muddy tracks up the basalt stones away from the hole. 'Do you see, Rim?' she asked.

'Yes,' I said, suddenly very happy. I looked at her. I loved her.

'You're my flesh and blood,' she said. 'Now, can you play?'

'Yes,' I said firmly. I played while we mounted the dike again. 'Fine,' she

said. The sheep scattered before us. We reached the top of the dike. Below us lay the silent town. 'That's wonderful,' Grandmother said. 'Now I'll try it.' But before she started she said, 'You see, Rim, you must never be afraid. You're a fine boy.'

Then she played — marvelous music, I thought, fast and happy. It was n't dignified, of course, her playing on top of the dike, in her golden helmet without the lace caps. Father would n't approve; I should n't tell Mother, and my aunts.

I stared. Over one of the yellow ribbons of roads that wound between the fields approached a group of cyclers — four women, straight, colorful, dignified. I tugged at Grandmother's wrist. 'Look!' I cried. 'My aunts!'

She stopped. 'Oh me, oh me, oh me!' she cried. 'Me playing the accordion on top of the dike! Oh me!'

'And you have n't your lace caps on!' I cried.

'Come, Rim! Come, we've got to hurry.' We ran down the dike steps, over the quay, through the men's bar, into the women's. There, chuckling, she quickly put on her lace caps over the helmet. I felt good, conspiring with her against my aunts — this woman whom everybody feared; it was strange, it was good.

'But, Grandmother, you said not to be afraid,' I said.

'Hush, Rim,' she laughed. 'Old people are fools.' She walked to the window holding my wrist, and we waited there till my very dignified aunts passed, never looking aside. 'There,' Grandmother said.

She took the accordion and started to play. Her black eyes twinkled. I listened; I loved her. After she had finished the first piece she said, 'Rim, when you want to live well, you've got to do all sorts of things people don't approve of.'

She played again. In the doorway the maid tapped her feet. When that piece

was done, Grandmother said to me, 'And look, Rim, don't ever go to America. Only fools go there.'

But I saw that her eyes were moist. 'I'll never go!' I cried.

She bobbed her head. 'You tell your father that,' she said.

Then she played again, her ribbons and ruffs bobbing, her eyes no longer moist. She smiled at me. The afternoon light sparkled on her cornelians.

VI

But three years later I did go to America. And the last night she played the accordion. It was going to be hers now, completely. Of course I had only had it Saturdays, and she played much better than I. I was twelve then, and I liked her even more, and understood her somewhat better. I knew then that some very brave old people were afraid of some very small things — like being caught by others playing an accordion

on the dike, and not wearing the lace caps over the helmet. But what was more, I knew that in regard to soft things like music and love they had to pretend they were feeling and doing something else. That's why she had bought the accordion for me, but played it herself. That was why she said only fools go to America, because she did n't want me to go.

But just before we left she said to me, 'But, Rim, only bigger fools come back once they get there. Only cowards.' And I was glad she did n't cry, but started to play the accordion.

And the American? It does n't matter. One day he disappeared. And the year we left the storks were back — new storks. And Grandmother's saloon was flourishing, and my aunts still pretended it did n't exist, even though it brought in more money for more new clothes. But Mother said, when she saw me watching Grandmother, 'Maybe it's just as well you're going to America.'

GOVERNMENT BY MIMEOGRAPH

BY LAWRENCE SULLIVAN

'It has been demonstrated by observation, and discovered by the innate sagacity of the pettiest as well as the greatest of despots, that the influence of a power is increased in proportion as its direction is rendered more central.' — ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE

I

IT is surprising how few people in the United States can tell you offhand the minimum measurements of an interstate potato. Indeed, a deplorable majority appear to be not aware of an official difference between interstate and *intra*-state potatoes. Is Washington's vast and costly system of public information a failure?

A press release from AAA on October 19, 1937, made the matter quite clear: —

The potato orders prohibit interstate shipment of potatoes less than one and one-half inches in diameter and grading less than U. S. No. 2. If recommended by the control committees, shipments of other small and low-grade potatoes may be limited.

Here is a departmental regulation pursuant, presumably, to a constitutional delegation of legislative powers. As such it carries the full authority of law. But on the day it was promulgated in Washington the New York stock market sold off badly in a 7,000,000-share day; the Japanese bombed Chapei; Mussolini imposed a 10 per cent capital levy on corporate wealth; the Duke and Duchess of Windsor announced a proposed American itinerary; and President Roosevelt, in a Hyde Park press conference, again balanced the budget without new taxes. Amid all these arresting headlines next morning the potato orders were ignored shamefully in the free press — which, in turn, pre-

sented an ugly problem in administration. At best it is difficult enough to secure compliance with myriad rules, regulations, and executive orders. When practically nobody has heard of the order, Washington's enforcement problem becomes all but impossible, and the whole structure of balanced abundance falls back into the inkpot. General Hugh S. Johnson was among the first to discover the problem, at about October 1933, when an important maker of salad dressing presented himself humbly at the bar of NRA to confess he never had heard of the Mayonnaise Code.

Such ghastly failures of public enlightenment, day after day and week after week for four years, stimulated at length in the higher councils of government a demand for some more effective system of national intelligence. If planned economy is to succeed, the theory runs, the news must do its work. When a condition prevails in which vital official decrees may be ignored, threatening thereby a breakdown of the entire potato system, does not a free press, in the old meaning of words, become an immediate impediment to progressive democratic government? As Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, states the problem: —

It would be unfair not to point out also, in concluding, that a steadfast national allegiance to any fixed course, international or

intermediate, also requires a certain degree of regimented opinion. To lower or tear down certain tariff walls, and to keep them down, would require on the part of the general public great solidarity of opinion, and great resolution. The degree of education and of propaganda required to make the great body of American consumers, rural and urban, stand firmly together for lower tariffs would have to be rather intense.¹

In this conception of affairs the news, to do its work properly, must be 'co-ordinated.' On January 12, 1937, President Roosevelt endorsed to Congress the recommendation of his special Committee on Administrative Management for an all-embracing central bureau of official intelligence:—

A Division of Information should be established to serve as a central clearing house for the correlation and coördination of the administrative policies of the several departments in the operation of their own informational services, and to perform related duties. The United States Information Service might well be transferred to this division. It might also develop into a service which would supervise and foster regional associations of executive officers of the Government and other activities for coördination of the field services. The Director of the [Budget] Bureau has been authorized by law to approve the use of printing and binding appropriations for the periodicals and journals published by Government agencies; the chief of the Division of Information could assist him in carrying out this duty.²

This is the first proposal in American history for a permanent central bureau of public information. Briefly, it contemplates the unification, under single-headed control immediately responsive to the White House, of the most elaborate, extensive, and costly system of official publicity ever established in peacetime under democratic forms.

In Washington to-day there are a few

¹ *America Must Choose*, World Affairs Pamphlet; Foreign Policy Association, New York, 1934, p. 32.

² Report of the President's Committee on Administrative Management, Senate Document 8, 75th Congress, 1st Session, p. 38.

more than 300 general publicity writers in the Federal agencies.³ Salaries range from \$3600 to \$12,000 a year. Prior to 1933 the Capital's roll of government publicists numbered 68.

During the fiscal year 1937, the Department of Agriculture carried 165 employees in its Office of Information.⁴ The Department of Agriculture, WPA, and several other agencies maintain press representatives in every state. HOLC, FHA, and the Social Security Board operate through regional press offices which encompass all the states. During the fiscal year 1936, WPA employed 33 persons in its Washington information section. The appropriation bill authorized salaries aggregating \$75,500 for this service, plus \$346,179 for 'printing, binding, mimeographing, multigraphing, and engraving.'⁵ In addition, WPA reported, in October 1936, some 8860 persons engaged on writer's relief projects throughout the country.⁶

From all these typewriters flows a mighty stream of material designed for public consumption. All of it is prepared with a view to presenting the originating agency, through the press, in the best possible light. Nor is it a reflection upon the integrity of any individual involved to say that the very scheme of organization in these publicity bureaus tends daily toward the suppression of matters which project departmental policies in other than a beneficent light.

In June 1937, the Brookings Institution reported to Congress that during a three-months period that year government press offices in Washington released 4794 newspaper articles, distributing a total of 7,139,457 copies, or an

³ Brookings Institution Report to Byrd Committee on Executive Reorganization, June 13, 1937, p. 534.

⁴ House Appropriations Hearings, March 10, 1937, p. 72.

⁵ House Appropriation Hearings, May 6, 1937, p. 49.

⁶ Report on Progress of the Works Programme, October 15, 1936, p. 39.

average of 95,192 copies for every working day. During a recent calendar year five agencies distributed news matrixes, one of them, the FHA, spending \$32,716 for that service alone.¹ During its first troubled year NRA issued 5991 press releases.²

Federal information offices have at their command some 3000 organized mailing lists, with a total of 2,280,900 names for direct-mail education.³ In addition, the AAA Soil Erosion Service, through its state extension agencies, maintains direct contact with roundly 3,500,000 farmers, or more than one half the individual farm plants in the United States.⁴

This development in government goodwill explains in part the tremendous increase in franked mail since 1933. Departmental free mail reported by the Post Office increased from an annual average of 43,131,503 pounds during the fiscal years 1930-1933 to an annual average of 87,167,631 pounds for the years 1934-1937.⁵

Lost postal revenues on this franked mail, as reported to Congress by the Postmaster General, averaged \$10,675,319 a year for the fiscal years 1930-1933, and \$29,712,270 annually during the next four years.⁶ The formal report of the Post Office shows 669,352,068 pieces of free mail handled during the fiscal year 1936, or an average of 22.3 pieces for every family enumerated in the 1935 Census estimate.

Motion pictures and radio also help in keeping the citizen abreast of the times. As of October 1936, there were 533 gov-

ernment films available for free exhibition in schools, churches, clubs, lodges, and civic associations.⁷ At that time the National Archives catalogued more than 15,000,000 feet of film controlled by 76 Federal agencies. The WPA production schedule for 1936 called for 30 pictures, at an average cost of \$6000. At least one of these was produced by the costly Technicolor process.⁸

Since the spring of 1935 certain government films have been booked free, at the option of the local exhibitor, through the regular commercial exchanges. In July 1936, Professor Tugwell's Resettlement Administration reported that its first three-reeler, *The Plough That Broke the Plains*, had been exhibited before 18,000,000 people.⁹ In August of the same year, *We, the People, and Social Security*, the first Hollywood venture of the Social Security Board, was reported in a leading trade journal to have figured in 'the most extensive distribution of motion-picture films ever undertaken by a government agency.'¹⁰

Government education by radio is in a relative infancy, but its steady expansion is marked readily by the selective listener. At executive hearings before the House Committee on Appropriations on March 10, 1937, a ranking officer of the Department of Agriculture reported that the Office of Information 'prepares annually 3000 separate manuscript radio programmes.' The Department, he explained, supervises three daily network programmes and sends 'syndicate programmes to 370 individual stations.'¹¹ The witness computed the Department's regular feature radio time, not including casual 'spots,' during the fiscal year 1937 as valued, by going commercial rates, at something more than \$2,000,000 — exclusive of chain speeches

¹ Senate Report No. 1275, 75th Congress, 1st session, August 16, 1937, p. 535 (the public document form of the Brookings Report).

² Report of House Judiciary Committee (Pub. 220, 74th, 1st, July 26, 1935).

³ Brookings Report, *op. cit.*, p. 534.

⁴ *Congressional Intelligence* report, September 25, 1937.

⁵ The average production cost, including paper, of all material in the Government Printing Office is 21.35 cents a pound, according to the annual report of the Public Printer for the fiscal year 1937.

⁶ *Congressional Record*, March 22, 1937, p. 3284.

⁷ Brookings Report, *op. cit.*, p. 536.

⁸ WPA declined early in 1937 to fill in a questionnaire of the Brookings Institution relative to its motion-picture releases.

⁹ Resettlement Administration press release.

¹⁰ *Motion Picture Herald*.

¹¹ Hearings, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

broadcast by the Secretary. He gave \$29,140 as the total expense to the Department for the preparation of these programmes.¹ During the summer of 1936, a presidential campaign year, WPA supplied weekly radio features to 209 stations.² Regularly scheduled radio series of lesser scope are managed by the Departments of Interior, Commerce, and Labor.

All of this recent expansion of Federal activities bearing directly upon the formation of public opinion has excited wide discussion. In May 1935, months before the statistics here documented were available in the public record, Dr. E. Pendleton Herring, a member of the Department of Government faculty at Harvard, presented his studied conclusion: 'Never before has the Federal Government undertaken on so vast a scale, and with such deliberate intent, the task of building a favorable public opinion toward its policies.'³ At about the same time Mr. Elisha Hanson, Washington counsel to the American Newspaper Publishers Association, summarized his observations on the expanding New Deal information services with the statement: 'For the first time in their history, the American people have seen their government turning to propaganda in myriad forms to win their favor and keep their support.'⁴ Reflecting the view of the active daily journalist in the Capital, Mr. Arthur Krock, chief of the *New York Times* bureau, wrote in April 1937: 'The wish to hamper the American press in its conception of itself as the eyes and ears of the public has been so persistently revealed in New Deal Washington that the newspaper profession is acutely sensitive to any suggestion of restriction.'⁵

¹ Hearings, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

² WPA Summary before House Appropriations Committee, April 1936.

³ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 179, p. 167.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁵ *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Princeton, N. J., Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 47.

Viewing the two facets of the discussion, which now has been gathering head for five years, we are confronted by a problem which reaches to the roots of democratic theory. 'Can one speak of government by consent,' asks Professor Herring, 'when this consent is manufactured by official press agents?'⁶ Yet the New Deal suggests more effective coördination between government and the press. The press responds that the New Deal already misuses its vast informational facilities for partisan or institutional propaganda, and that, therefore, the traditional safeguards and protections of the free press must be buttressed rather than relaxed.

What, then, of the cry of propaganda, suppression, and censorship so widely aired nowadays? Is it political heat-lightning, or does it warn of a new policy in American government, fashioned after the totalitarian pattern of managed opinion?

II

Two charges are to be made against government propaganda: the first, misstatement of fact; the second, constant use of emotional appeal and bitter invective against public criticism.

In the progress of European dictatorships since the twenties there has emerged a rather uniform pattern in the movement toward control of public opinion. In this sequence the policy normally develops through four overlapping phases. The first is distinguished by a redundancy of strong supporting material extolling government policies and aims. As the natural resistance to regimentation mounts, the public clamor of opposition becomes more insistent; whereupon the second phase is characterized by a pronounced official resentment of all criticism. Next comes indirect censorship, whereby news is distorted and given a false emphasis. At this phase reports and surveys unfavor-

⁶ *Annals of the American Academy*, Vol. 179, p. 171.

able to current policies simply are filed, and no questions answered. The last phase brings positive measures of formal governmental control over the channels of news dissemination, a step which marks the full flower of managed opinion. We have constantly before us the spectacle of what has happened in Germany. On June 25, 1934, Dr. Goebbels proclaimed: 'The right to criticize belongs to the National Socialist Party. I deny anybody else such a right. The right to criticize is exercised by the National Socialist Party to a sufficient extent.'¹

The enormous historical significance of the world's recent drift to canned news is summarized forcefully by Carl W. Ackerman, Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism in Columbia University. Reporting in July 1937 on a six-months survey of public opinion in Europe, Dean Ackerman said: 'The line of demarcation between nations dominated by a war psychology and those still subject to the psychological element of peaceful ideas is between managed public opinion and the free exchange of information. No one can cite a single exception.'²

An illuminating example of misrepresentation in the prevailing system of public information from Washington is found in the routine White House and Treasury releases touching the budget and fiscal policies. Under the two-budget system, various accounts have been shifted between the 'ordinary' and 'emergency' classifications from year to year, until to-day no one outside the Treasury can arrange an accurate comparative table of expenditures for any two successive fiscal years since 1932.

The projection of this confusion into the news is illustrated by an Associated Press dispatch from Washington under date of December 28, 1933, which began:

¹ *Propaganda and Dictatorship*, *Annals of the American Academy*, Vol. 179, p. 216.

² *Annals of the American Academy*, Vol. 192, p. 39.

High Democratic spokesmen described President Roosevelt as determined to-day to concentrate primary attention of the Seventy-third Congress upon a budget designed to provide an \$800,000,000 surplus above ordinary Federal operating costs in 1934-1935.

Although reconciled to a present-year deficit well above the billion mark because of emergency expenditures, the Administration was said to have set down tentative budget estimates reading: Income \$3,400,000,000, ordinary outgo, \$2,600,000,000, etc.

In the days before editors realized that national budget news turned on special — and shifting — official definitions of 'ordinary' and 'emergency,' this news was displayed prominently on the front page of one important metropolitan daily in the East³ under the head:—

PRESIDENT AIMING AT NEAR BILLION SURPLUS FOR 1934

And a secondary headline continued:

"Pay-As-You-Go" Basis
Without Tax Rise Seen

Neither the White House nor the Treasury, of course, writes the headlines. But within reasonable limits the character of the news determines the import of the heads and the relative emphasis of display. Here is page-one news from the highest official source, which either was not true or had been so prepared for announcement as to present an entirely misleading public understanding of the subject at hand. As it turned out, the Treasury position at the end of the fiscal year 1934-1935 did not show a surplus of \$800,000,000, but a deficit of \$3,575,300,000.

Nor does the responsibility for such flagrant misrepresentation of policy rest with the Associated Press, which faithfully projected the official utterance from Washington. The indictment lodges rather against a system of planned confusion in Federal finances, which makes any official declaration the ultimate news

³ *Washington Evening Star*, December 28, 1933.

on the subject. Nobody else possibly can have so much as a sentence of demonstrable news in the matter, for only the White House and Treasury can know next year's definitions of such words as 'ordinary,' 'emergency,' and 'trust fund.'

Four years after this remarkable headline surplus for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1935, Senator Harry F. Byrd, of Virginia, in an address before the Academy of Political Science¹ touched upon misleading Treasury reports in this vein:—

I feel completely safe in saying that the credits and recoverable assets shown in the government reports have been grossly overestimated. Take, for example, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The government purchased \$500,000,000 of stock and about \$4,000,000,000 of notes of this corporation. The stocks and the notes are carried at face value, leaving the impression that the total assets represent sound values and will ultimately be recovered into the Treasury to reduce the public debt. This conclusion is accepted by the public by reason of the confidence in the soundness and efficiency of the Chairman, Mr. Jones.

However, the Brookings Institution, employed by the Senate Committee on Reorganization, recently disclosed that \$2,500,000,000 of the assets of the RFC were diverted for relief expenditures, and to pay the regular expenses of other agencies, and for other expenditures, none of which are recoverable. So to-day the stock of the RFC is valueless and the notes are not worth more than fifty cents on the dollar in recoverable assets. Yet only recently the corporation issued a financial statement showing and claiming a surplus of \$150,000,000 as of December 31, last [1936].

If one seeks to excuse this instance of official misinformation as merely an oversight on the part of very busy gentlemen in Washington, he must do so in full knowledge that the amount involved is \$2,650,000,000 of public money.²

¹ November 10, 1937, quoted from NBC text, checked against delivery.

² Chairman Jones announced in a press conference on December 16, 1937, that legislation to cancel \$2,675,000,000 of RFC notes held by the Treasury would be recommended to Congress during 1938.

These two examples in *billions* epitomize fairly a general condition affecting Treasury news from Washington to-day. As a result, every informed person now reads the budget reports in the manner of Mr. Stark Young's sophisticated parrot — 'turning his head this way and that, as if one eye had seen what the other had reason to doubt.'

The corollary device of misrepresentation by truthful evasion is illustrated by an announcement from AAA late in 1937 concerning the national vote on potato control. The Department of Agriculture's referendum closed on October 2. The immediate official announcement of that date reported that 30,680 farmers had voted, with 82 per cent supporting the proposed programme. The Department's own figures of 250,000 to 300,000 commercial potato growers in the United States show that the favorable vote for control was something less than 10 per cent of the whole number of potato farmers. The remaining 90 per cent either failed to vote or voted against the programme. Hear, then, the AAA press release of October 25:—

Growers in commercial potato-producing areas voted on the proposed acreage stabilization provisions in a referendum which ended October 2. More than 82 per cent favored the proposed potato programme. As a result, the potato goals will be included in the 1938 conservation programme.

To the lay reader this text imparts a clear impression that 'more than 82 per cent' of the potato growers voted for the programme, whereas the fact is that only about 10 per cent voted approval — and it was on that basis that the 1938 curtailment programme was inaugurated. As an example of news technique, this incident appears to square well with the dicta of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*: 'It is not the task of propaganda to weigh the various rights. It must, on the contrary, exclusively underline the new position.'

Since 1933 every basic economic index of the Federal Government has been

shifted in some degree to a new equation of computation. Some forty items have been added to the Labor Department's commodity equation of living costs, and the comparative base shifted from the 1913 normal to the 1923-1925 average, with the result that the official cost-of-living index now appears considerably lower on the comparative scale than would have been the case with the former equation.¹ The weekly business index of the Department of Commerce is on a new basis, adopted to give greater weight to retail trade in rural areas. By a mere cosmic coincidence, presumably, this shift was made in a period when Washington was distributing some \$600,000 a year in farm bounties. The changed rural weight in the national weekly index of retail trade gave for a time a welcome fillip to the recovery statistics. It was like keeping warm in the Yukon by changing the spots on the thermometer.

Other changes of the same technical character were made in the Labor Department's system of monthly reports on industrial employment and payrolls; in the Federal Reserve System's weekly condition statement, in which the number of reporting cities was reduced from 125 to 90, and later increased to 101; in the Commerce Department's monthly reports on foreign trade, to include the more specific classifications of 'imports for immediate consumption' and 'imports for warehouse,' as against the former single classification of mere 'imports.'

As a result of this last change, effective in April 1934, the department's routine monthly figures now must be read in the light of a footnote in very small type which runs: —

Import index numbers throughout this statement are based on general imports in 1929 and 1932, and on imports for consumption in 1936 and subsequent years.

Thus, we eliminate from the comparative index tables covering part of the

period under the reciprocal trade treaties the imports to warehouses, which, when they later go into consumption, are no longer imports.

Doubtless many of these changes were justified on grounds of administrative economy or technical efficiency; but it is a fact that in the aggregate they operated uniformly toward two general results in the monthly and annual comparisons as projected to the nation: first, to present a better economic picture in the recovery period than would have been indicated by comparative tables based on the old equations; and, secondly, to make accurate annual comparisons utterly impossible in some of the fundamental economic indices.

In a few cases the most expensive private services were able to cut through all this jungle of technical adjustments and get to the real comparative results from month to month. But for the great body of public opinion the official picture stood, with all its distortions, as the honest measure of our relative economic position.

Neither press, radio, nor motion picture can ever prove a going policy ineffective so long as it is impossible to gain comparative figures from the only source equipped to compile them.

Another impressive device for enlivening official news came to light in North Dakota in August 1936, at a moment when President Roosevelt was on a non-political tour inspecting the drought devastation of the Dust Bowl. Pictures widely circulated through the daily press by the Resettlement Administration were proved, in at least two instances, to have been staged in advance. In one case a particularly depressing scene showed the sun-bleached skull of a steer, in the hot sands of a Dakota countryside literally crying for Federal relief funds. Inquiry by the press at Washington brought forth in a few days the official admission, from the Photographic Section of RA, that the skull was a picture property. It had

¹ *Labor Bulletin*, No. R. 384, October 1936.

been moved 'about fifty feet' for better light effect, and had been arranged in the heart-rending setting by the official photographer.

III

Political invective and bitter social incitement by government during the last five years mark a milestone in the development of the democratic theory in America. In other countries such resentment of criticism usually has signalized the second phase of the movement toward managed opinion.

The 'money-changers,' of course, were driven from the temple in President Roosevelt's inaugural address of March 4, 1933; but hard names for the opposition did not emerge fully as a national policy until about October of that year. At that point, when NRA had begun to sag and there was much loose talk in Washington concerning the probability of Ford Motor Company's being shut down the next week by Executive Order, General Johnson, brilliantly supported by the ever-alliterative Charles Michelson, took to the microphone coast-to-coast in a last desperate effort to make democracy work. Big fellows who gagged in public over the Blue Eagle phantasmagoria were 'economic Neanderthals,' and the lesser fry, mine-run 'chiselers.' Between these front and rear ranks in the Army of Darkness moved vast regiments of 'industrial dinosaurs,' goose-stepping to the evil pipings of our 'corporals of disaster.'

Since political emotionalism or social passion always feeds upon itself, it is not to be wondered at that within two years name calling had advanced to the status of an accepted instrument of the more abundant life. 'Economic royalists,' 'princes of privilege,' and 'modern Macaulays' are household words in the nation's vocabulary.

When Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, then a resident of the United States, published early in 1934 a letter criticizing

sharply the President's summary cancellation of the air-mail contracts, he was denounced by a White House secretary as a publicity seeker — an incident which moved Mr. Walter Lippmann to sound the friendly warning: 'The notion that you must not answer a critic, but must discredit him, is bad medicine anywhere at any time in any cause, however noble and however righteous.'¹

To-day NRA is dead and buried; but the new spirit in government marches on, now in the official observations of Mr. Aubrey Williams, Deputy Administrator of the WPA and Director of the National Youth Administration, before a group of some 850 school officials and PTA assistants in New York City, November 7, 1937: —

I often wonder why educators don't spend more time discussing the national income and its division. But, of course, I know why. You know without me [*sic*] telling you. The way to advancement is to be silent about these things. Don't stick your neck out. Don't make statements that will get back to the school board. Don't get into controversial subjects — that's a crime. Don't disturb the children. . . . I never meet a teacher who has the guts to teach these facts that I don't feel like saying, 'God bless him.' He knows the risk he is running, and that the way to advancement lies in keeping quiet.²

The guiding attitude of mind which inspires this demoralizing class feeling throughout our government to-day is attributed by many informed Washington observers to the large influence of several younger advisers generally described as 'the Georgetown Group.' It was this inner circle of White House counselors whom Professor Raymond Moley described last October as 'a group of zealots who dog the President's heels at Washington, always pressing him to make more and more inflammatory declarations of class warfare.'³

¹ *Los Angeles Times*, March 21, 1934.

² *New York Herald Tribune*, November 8, 1937.

³ *News Week*, October 11, 1937, p. 44.

A few weeks later, in the *New York Times* for Sunday, November 14, 1937, Mr. Arthur Krock surveyed the prospect for the special session of the Congress to assemble on the morrow, concluding with the glad tidings:—

Meanwhile, it is heartening to report that at a recent White House council adherence was duly sworn to the capitalist system when its future usefulness was called into question. This correspondent has reliably heard that when two conferees expressed doubt capitalism was worth giving another chance, or could be saved thereby, Harry L. Hopkins warmly denounced the viewpoint and the President showed the firmest sort of agreement with his Works Progress Administrator.¹

It is not possible to mark precisely the beginnings of the revolution pattern in Washington's official thinking, but the mimeograph materials offer an illuminating timetable of its progress in propaganda. As early as May 1933, Anne O'Hare McCormick, in an appraisal of Mr. Roosevelt's political philosophy, reported after an extended interview at the White House: 'President Roosevelt intends to be the exponent of the New Mind in America, the open mind. . . . This search he recognizes as a revolutionary process. He thinks of himself as the leader of a revolution.'²

Four months later we find an echo of the New Mind in a Knoxville press release of the TVA, under date of September 28. Outlining the Valley programme, Director David E. Lilienthal said it fell naturally into two parts. The first would be the immediate work of construction. 'And then there is the long-range programme—the laying of plans for future economic and social

objectives—plans which may take years to come to fruition, but which will have far-reaching consequences on the future course of our national life.'

In the same vein Mr. Frank C. Walker told the forty-eight state directors of the National Emergency Council at their first plenary conference in Washington, on January 31, 1934, that this new agency would assist the President's programme 'to bring immediate relief and recovery to the country, and to form a new and solid basis for a worth-while and social economic system.'³

A profound note of hostility toward the whole system of tripartite government was heard in the memorable horse-and-buggy press conference at the White House on May 31, 1935, in which the President commented at length, and with some feeling, on the NRA decision; and again in the radio address of Secretary Wallace on January 26, 1936, which described the Supreme Court's decision invalidating AAA as 'the greatest legalized steal in American history.'

Within two months of this latter observation, WPA was on the boards at the Biltmore Theatre, New York, with *Triple-A Ploughed Under*. In the finale the stage lights were dimmed while the players chanted Secretary Wallace's characterization of the Supreme Court's AAA decision. The curtain then was lowered upon a symbolic nation crying in anguish in the general direction of the already projected Soil Conservation Act, 'We need you! We need you!'⁴

On another occasion, in July 1937, the WPA Theatre applied the gentle balm of Federal entertainment to a CIO strike against the independent steels, moving a troupe of seventeen actors and singers from New York to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for a special performance of *The Cradle Will Rock*. This opera, by Mr.

¹ Present at this conference were the President; Mr. Isador Lubin, Commissioner of Labor Statistics; Mr. Harry L. Hopkins, Director of WPA; Mr. Leon Henderson, Economic Adviser in WPA; and Mr. Lauchlin Currie, Assistant Director of Research and Statistics for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

² 'Where Do We Go from Here?' in the *New Outlook*, May 1933.

³ NEC press release, January 31, 1934.

⁴ This première reported at some length in the regular news section of the *New York Times*, March 15, 1936.

Marc Blitzstein, depicted with some power the unhappy lot of the citizens of Steeltown, U.S.A., should they fail to form a United Front. After the opera, a local reviewer reported, officials of the CIO remarked a striking resemblance between the stage character, Mr. Mister, portrayed as an influential citizen of Steeltown, and Mr. Eugene G. Grace, president of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation.

'We thought the best thing to give them would be a labor play,' said Mr. John G. Ramsay, president of Bethlehem Lodge 1409, S. W. O. C. 'We thought it would probably be far more educational than speakers.'

By accident or design, much of Washington's social propaganda operates to discourage normal popular confidence in men and institutions. In turn, since 1933, every principal segment of our economic life has been subjected to concentrated attack — banks, railroads, utilities, air lines, the telephone system, merchant marine, stock and commodity exchanges.

So hopeless, when viewed in the worst possible light, did the whole panorama of American life under a Constitution appear at one point that the National Resources Committee found it advisable to bring the situation formally to the attention of the President. In a land-use survey published on July 9, 1936, the Committee declared its solemn conclusion that 'most of the territory occupied by the United States is not naturally suited for a permanent civilization.'

Thus moves government by mimeograph, the official fever of uncharitable denunciation and unmeasured institutional smearing mounting steadily, in season and out, until it falls at length, on February 5, 1937, upon the Supreme Court of the United States.

President Roosevelt has denied many times that he seeks to exercise undue control over public opinion, but the

open record to date appears to offer at least circumstantial evidence that, unwittingly perhaps, he has permitted an important segment of his Administration to fall into an attitude of mind and a pattern of conduct which in other countries have led ultimately to complete suppression of free speech and free press.

'It is one of the characteristics of dictatorships,' James Truslow Adams reminds us, 'that, whatever aims or motives they start with, they feel impelled, by their very nature, to move from one danger to, and one deprivation of, the liberties of the people to another. If power becomes more and more concentrated in the hands of one man, that man has to get the backing of the people either by sheer force or by making the people want what he wants, which comes to mean control of the press, radio, and all organs of public opinion.'¹

That, in a word, is the verdict of all human history. If America is to escape this calamity she must attack Federal propaganda at the root. She must re-establish honest public documents and faithful public service in the field of governmental intelligence. She must open once more the normal avenues of orderly inquiry by responsible critics of politics and government. Democracy never can hope to find her way so long as she walks blindfolded.

The traditions of the free press are rooted deeply in American life. They promise to withstand the present movement toward government control of news and opinion. Press, radio, and camera, as institutions, are alive to the new tendencies in Washington. But the decision is yet to be made, the action defined. For the moment, public opinion in America is dominated decisively in the field of statecraft by the modern technique of propaganda — propaganda of the government, by the government, and for the government.

¹ *New York Times Magazine*, February 21, 1937.

CRIPPLED

An Appeal to Motorists

BY RUTH SAWYER

I

I AM writing on the back of old hospital charts. I found this stub of a pencil in my handbag. By propping myself on an elbow I can feel the pencil's way across the paper in this scant light. For harder surface on the bed I have spread out a year-old copy of the *Ladies' Home Journal* — that one in which was printed Paul de Kruif's article called 'Milwaukee's Death Fight.' It is a good article. It tells with carefully measured horror of the killings by motorcars in the United States. I take but one exception to it: Paul de Kruif has written nothing about those whom the motorcars leave behind — still living. He does not write of the cripples.

If they knew, the doctors and nurses would not let me write — they would take away these poor tools. But I cover them up when the night nurse comes in and feign drowsiness. This writing to-night is all that stands between me and sanity; drugs seem to have no power of commitment to-night; sleep seems as far removed as death — now.

I am not the good craftsman that Paul de Kruif is; I shall make but a poor job of this. But I have that which he had not — a something that compels me, that will not leave me inert, silent. De Kruif wrote of thirty thousand; I write of one. His was a laboratory survey; mine is an immediate human document.

Across the narrow stretch of room, in his cot, lies my John Paul, whimpering.

For twenty days he has been whimpering. It has taken an amazing lot of drugs to keep under so small a boy. At rare intervals the whimperings become words; they break through his stupor, like embedded needles working their way to the surface. 'Mummy, I want to get up. Please, Mummy!'

John Paul is four years old. He will never get up again — that is, never as a whole, free, exultant little boy. He will never throw back the covers of his cot, shoot across his room and ours, and drop like a plummet, stomach down, on our bed, shouting, 'Here I come — Daddy and Mum — Daddy and Mum! It's time to get up — up — up!' Nor will he take the stairs, down, at a gallop, chanting, 'I'll set the table. Knives and forks, napkins and spoons, porridge and prunes,' and burst into ecstatic laughter because he has found words with singing sounds. I have read words with stabs of agony in them; but I have never written them before. We think of terrible things always happening to that mythical 'other person,' somebody who bears no relationship to us — no close relationship. Well, I am that 'other person.'

Sometimes John Paul plucks at his chest with his uninjured hand and says: 'Take it off, please, Mummy. It's so heavy.' He is in a plaster cast from his throat to his thighs; there are casts on his legs and one arm. There is a metal contrivance around his neck to support

his head; it is set into the cast on his body. He looks like a tiny bird trussed up with a steel girder. Take wings from a bird, and all power to fly — would he still be a bird? I say, No! As I say that all childhood has ended for John Paul at four years of age. The attributes of childhood are freedom, unlimited faith, joy unrestrained; take these away and what is left?

II

In the twenty days we have been here I have had many letters. They have taught me the meaning of the words 'black laughter.' This has nothing to do with race or color; it is the laughter that comes from a heart sunk in perpetual night. They have meant to be kind — those letters. They have succeeded in being ghastly; for they have bidden me to thank God that the life of my boy has been spared. Many have come from strangers — from parents whose children have been killed outright in accidents. They think that God has shown me a special mercy because John Paul is going to live. I wish they could hear him whimpering now.

For the last two or three days the doctors and nurses have worn a different face. They have begun to smile and talk of miracles. There is a kind of vain-glory in their voices; and how can they keep it out? Throughout these twenty sullen days they have done superb watching and working. They have called it good teamwork — the X-ray man, the surgeon, a doctor, a bone specialist, two nurses, all trying to compensate for what a boy in one instant did because he was late for his date with a girl. Inch by inch they have beaten death back — while I have prayed the victory would not be to them. At first they hoped nothing; I don't think they expected John Paul to live through that first night. After that they shook their heads and said they did not know — they could not tell. Their faces looked less grim; they talked about hope. But to-day they could not keep

their voices down when they said, 'He will live!' It sounded like shouting.

Those words have stayed imprisoned in the room all to-day. To-night they are booming and beating back at me like devil drums: 'He will live — live — live!' No one who has not prayed that death might come to a beloved one can understand. I feel ground under those same wheels which went over John Paul — inanimate, senseless instruments which knew nothing of the recklessness that guided them or of their ghastly accomplishment. Every night drugs have snuffed out my consciousness for a few merciful hours; I have been able to go to sleep praying, 'Please, God, let John Paul go before another day.' But to-night I think there is no power in heaven or on earth to bring oblivion. I must face life; I must face all its implications and fears for the three of us.

Writers have dealt well, understandingly, with death; they have given to it many faces, horrible, benign, antic; but few have seen life wearing that ghoulis, grinning mask it wears for me. I know every line in it; I could mould it with my two hands. And, having done it, I must break it, smash it until there is nothing left of it but dust; and then, with these same two hands, try to make for life a mask which will not frighten my John Paul — that he will find in it something of mercy, something of love, something of faith. And how? Can anyone tell me how I am going to do this?

First I must face a lie — and live it, convincingly, cheerfully. We must live it between us, big Paul and I, and say nothing of it. No one must know that we are not glad our child is to live. All our lives we must act as if we thanked God that we have in our keeping this small crushed body, somehow held together, made to function again, that it may live in torment. We must not inwardly curse because a spirit once so blithe, so free and joyous, lies caged under our eyes. I could put an end to that caging so easily to-night did I not believe in

God — that in His power alone lie the giving and the taking of life. It may strike many as idiotic, after what has happened to John Paul, that his mother's faith can go on. But it does. I cannot hold God accountable; it is n't that kind of God I believe in. This keeps me from finishing that murder someone began and just failed to finish. A little more and the spinal cord would have been severed, the head hopelessly fractured.

I look at the years that stretch ahead of us and wonder. For the present John Paul will do his living on a wheeled stretcher — that much the doctors know. After that a wheel chair, perhaps; at best, a brace and crutches. Big Paul and I shall have to watch the spirit of a child hurled suddenly into man's growth. What will it do to him? Shall we accumulate that courage and wisdom to outstride the years by a little margin and so make plain and easier the way?

There will be winters when the three of us will watch other boys buckling on their skis, slinging skates over hockey sticks and taking the road to the pond. There will be summers with bicycles and tennis rackets, and the lake to swim in; boy scouts hiking by, blanket rolls on their backs, their faces tilted upwards to far horizons. Can we by grit and prayer help John Paul perform that miracle of freeing his spirit to a far horizon, sending it forth to skim ice, top snow-bound hills, follow the trail with the strong, free bodies of other boys? This much I know, for which I can be honestly thankful — John Paul can never drive a car at fifty miles an hour around a corner and, by so doing, cage another's spirit in a helpless body.

We have known two boys who have grown up in wheel chairs. Both of them have turned out beasts, taking almost the only pleasure they could feel in making others suffer. Life and their limitations have bitten into them deep — like an acid. They might have whined and cringed; instead, their spirits have turned bitter as gall. They have armed

themselves against all compassion, all companionship; they stand out lonely and rebellious souls. One of these was dropped as a baby by a nurse-girl; he has scored his parents throughout a lifetime for not letting him die. The other as a little boy was thrown out of a team, behind runaway horses; he has grown up into the cruelest man I have ever known. How are we going to keep John Paul from becoming as one of these?

To-night I am afraid of everything. I am afraid of the world — it is no longer a secure world; I am afraid of those who people it — they can no longer be trusted; I am afraid of life and what it may do, not only to John Paul, but to his father and me. We are very young, untempered. If human beings are main channels through which a divine love and wisdom can reach this earth, big Paul and I will make but twisted and clogged ones, I am afraid. He was twenty-three, I was nineteen, when John Paul was born. Even now life and college seem to have taught me nothing I need to know. My mind, my whole nature, are as little trained for what lies ahead of me as John Paul is trained to build dams to hold back immense volumes of water; my soul lies as smashed as his body. And yet I must teach a young soul to run free, to shout and be glad, even while it dwells in a tortured body. I know of no school or college that trains for such a life; I know of no graduate teachers of young souls.

Big Paul is, at twenty-seven, an instructor in our university; his salary is very small. Up to now, money has not seemed to matter a great deal. We have had love and youth and John Paul. Now we are facing what for even moderately wealthy people means an enormous expense. John Paul must have everything that money can buy to make him more comfortable, less helpless, less set apart from normal childhood, and he must be given a chance for man-growth to be fine, sound, disciplined from within, that he may not be warped in anything but body. If we set aside for ourselves

the lowest possible living expense, we can never provide and pay for those necessities our son must have. If we allow ourselves only enough to cover the bare bones of living, we shall still be always in debt; we shall never die solvent.

And that does not trouble me, except indirectly. Can we, perpetually shouldering a debt, keep the burden of it from settling somehow on John Paul's shoulders? If he continues to love us, to hold us blameless, will he not grow disturbed, fretful, because of what we carry? What I am trying to write is — can his father and I so detach ourselves from debt-consciousness that even the shadow of it will not rest over our life for our son to mark? It must be so — but how?

We have only rarely had outside help in our small home. We have made little of our work and done it pleasantly, together. We have made much of little happinesses, picnics and bus rides, holidays and friendships; these we have shared almost equally, the three of us. Winters we skated, with John Paul buckled into his sled; summers we swam while he paddled; we played tennis, while he shouted the score after us and ran for the balls that went over the back nets. Now, for a time at least, this togetherness cannot go on. Big Paul must take his recreation, and I what I need for a sound, refreshed mind, apart.

I am writing things as I think them out — groping along a blind path. I must learn to be all things to John Paul; I must renew a glad spirit within me. Like the Hindu magician's rosebush, I must grow from seed to a full-blooming almost at the wink of an eye. Right now I must know what to say to John Paul when there are no longer drugs to dull his consciousness and he plucks at his plaster cast as he is doing now and begs, 'Mummy, take it off. It's so heavy — please, Mummy!' Through some divine agency can I help him bear that weight — help him lie still and not let his spirit corrode in the interminable weeks and months ahead of us? How am I going to

reconcile a little boy four years old to a belief in the mercy and love of that God to whom I pray?

III

I have said that money — the lack of it — concerned us little. I was wrong. It concerned us more than we knew. It meant we shared a house on a street that was not so desirable for a little boy to play on. There is a traffic light at one end; this slows up the through traffic, but it does not keep a car from turning the corner at fifty miles. I can see that car still coming. Even when the drugs have worked, the last thing I remember is trying to spring from my chair on the porch and crying, 'Don't go after the kitty, John Paul! Don't!'

The doctors and nurses have said many times that they never could have managed to do so much for John Paul if he had not been such a biddable child; even drugged, he somehow hears and tries to do what he is told. We have used do's and don't's with him so little; but the don't's have always been heeded — except that one.

The night nurse has been in to see if I was asleep. Satisfied, she has eased John Paul to his pillows, given him a drink through his tube, then stood and looked down at him so long I wanted to scream. What was she thinking? Perhaps she, too, thinks that surgery and medicine, that skilled care, are not always so merciful. But it is not her business to tell me that.

John Paul breaks out in his whimpering. He is speaking more distinctly: 'Please, Mummy, please, I want to get up.' A sob comes from across the room. I think it's the nurse, and that's funny. I have always thought her excellent, but hard-surfaced. Maybe she has to be to nurse the John Pauls that come through the emergency entrance of the hospital.

She's gone, and I go over again and again that afternoon. I was sitting on the porch, sewing on one of those few little dresses needed for that brother or sister

of John Paul's that we had expected in four more months. John Paul was running his scooter down the sidewalk, the gray kitten at his heels. That kitten had a predecessor; only it was black and white. In the early summer it was playing on the steps with John Paul one minute — the next it had darted out into the street and was run over by a car. John Paul saw it, smashed so flat and bloody on the roadway that we had to scrape it up with his sand shovel to bury it and get it at least beyond reach of eye.

On this afternoon — a full month later — John Paul had stopped by the curb to ring the little bell he has on his handle bar; the kitten had hopped sideways to jump for his fingers, and then had made one of those swift darts over the curb, towards the centre of the street. John Paul saw the car coming before I did. The little boy had seen that other car which had killed the black and white kitten, and I suppose it flashed through his brain that this one would be smashed the same way. I heard the scooter go over as he sprang after the kitten. He was off the curb before I called. I don't think he even heard me, he was so intent on getting the kitten before the car did; the arm that held the kitten, safe, was the only part of him that was not injured.

The boy stopped and came back. He had no license; he was driving a borrowed car. He said straightforwardly to the police: 'I was going fifty — late for a date.' He is a restless, nervous, shallow

boy; he does n't know what he has done. He has come often to the hospital to ask after John Paul; and this afternoon he met big Paul just outside. When he heard what the doctors had said, he was relieved of all responsibility. 'Gee, I'm glad. If he'd died now I'd have felt awful.' There is no case against him; he has no money to lose. He is probably thanking his stars to-night that he got out of it so easily.

I am not writing just as John Paul's mother; I am writing for all mothers — all people who have had to suffer for this senseless, irresponsible crippling of someone dear to them, who have had to rebuild lives as I shall have to.

Is there no executive or power to speak for these fifty thousand crippled each year by someone's negligence? Is there no way of arousing the conscience of the drivers of this nation? For centuries men have written that we have war because at heart men like to fight. Well — there have always been battles to be fought that did not involve killing human beings; there have always been greater victories to win than those won by one warring people against another. Here is a fight worthy of a nation's mettle; is it not a better thing to fight to save life than to mutilate it?

The nurse has been in again. I must stop. But if there be those who read of my John Paul, pray God they may think on and for other childhood — the whole, the able, the free; and may they be stirred beyond peace of mind or rest of body.

NO SANTA CLAUS IN HOUSING

BY THOMAS S. HOLDEN

I

ECONOMIC realists are coming to the front in housing. They are gradually developing the idea that a practical home-building programme for the United States is neither a holy crusade to be conducted regardless of expense to present and future taxpayers nor a speculative building boom regardless of the costs of a future depression.

In the summer of 1937, some Senators entertained the notion that subsidized housing for low-income families should work toward a budgeted maximum cost, just as practically all housing does which is built privately for families who pay their own way. Perhaps some of these Senators had read a taxpayer's letter in the *New York Herald Tribune* which pointed out that, while Uncle Sam was finishing up a model-housing experiment in Brooklyn to the tune of \$8500 or more per subsidized family, private enterprise was selling new houses in the outskirts of Brooklyn to unsubsidized families at \$4000 each. In spite of protests, these Senators had their way and wrote into the Wagner-Steagall Act (known since passage as the United States Housing Act of 1937) top limits of construction costs at \$1000 per room in cities with less than 500,000 population and \$1250 per room in cities of 500,000 and up. Still other sections of this new Act give evidence of a marked advance in understanding the practical problems of a public housing programme, particularly the provisions for local initiation of projects and the sharing of

financial responsibility between Federal, state, and local governments.

Another group of realists, the privately organized National Housing Committee, brought out a report in December 1937 which sheds some light on the supposed housing shortage that was going to stimulate automatically a nationwide building boom, cause stocks of building-material companies to soar to all-time highs, and create a prosperity hitherto unknown. The National Housing Committee found, as the result of its studies, a statistical shortage of 2,000,000 homes. But it introduced into its studies a novel idea, a consideration of the incomes of the people who need the houses. According to the Committee, 21 per cent of the needed dwelling units are for families who could pay from \$20 to \$30 a month in rent; 69 per cent of the estimated shortage is in dwelling units to rent from \$10 to \$20 a month; and the remaining 10 per cent is for units to rent at less than \$10 a month. In this study, values of houses for potential sale to prospective owners were converted to a rental equivalent and included in the figures here quoted.

In short, most of the needed housing is for income classes that have customarily occupied second-, third-, or fourth-hand housing; the families who used second-hand Buicks until Fords, Chevrolets, and Plymouths were invented. We have arrived at that stage of our economic and social development reached somewhat earlier in most European coun-

tries, where we must either do a better job on housing than we have ever done before or witness, in a country which has nearly sixty acres of land per family, a continuous process of greater and greater overcrowding of people and families in the lowest third of the income scale.

II

There is, therefore, one central problem in housing: the problem of producing better houses for less money. This simple statement summarizes a very complex set of facts. Confusion in housing discussion has arisen in part from the complexity of this primary factor, but also in part from the close relationship of housing to two other problems. The first of these, provision of decent living for low-income families, is essentially the problem of poverty, although it is frequently spoken of as 'the housing problem'; the second one, slum rehabilitation, is the problem of rejuvenating blighted real estate and of reclaiming the urban dust bowls we inherited from past eras of planless city growth.

A house, final product of a building operation, is a structure on a site, a parcel of improved real estate. It is, therefore, economically and legally in a different category from any other class of manufactured merchandise. This complex product consists of: —

1. Shelter (walls, roofs, floors, openings)
2. Mechanical equipment (plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, wiring, elevators, etc.)
3. Environmental factors (orientation, site proximity to public utilities, transportation, social and recreational facilities, etc.)
4. Financing and maintenance requirements (mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, repairs, etc.)

All four of these elements create cost factors which must be brought under control if the announced objective of the American nation, better homes and more civilized living for all the people, is to be attained. There is as yet no agency, either of government or of pri-

vate enterprise, that has mastered the fourfold problem of cost in any large way, though some real progress has been made both in understanding the true nature of the job and in certain developments that give great promise for the future.

If producing better houses irrespective of cost could meet the necessities of the situation, the United States would now lead the world in housing progress, instead of trailing along at the tag end of the procession. We are clever at inventions and at the technique of exploiting inventions, and we have developed home conveniences of every sort that are the wonder of the modern world. In recent years, a bewildering array of new structural materials has been offered in the market, greatly to be desired by everyone, but when they are assembled the constructed end product is beyond the purses of 90 per cent of American families.

In spite of the undoubted merit of many of the new materials, building accessories, and home conveniences that are offered in the market to-day, they have not yet tended very far in the direction of lowering the cost of building. Most of the modern improvements have been purposely adapted for installation in existing buildings, or for alteration and modernization of existing buildings. Consequently their effect in creating a demand for new buildings has been rather limited; they tend to make existing buildings obsolete, but they do not create an urge great enough to overcome the high cost of scrapping existing buildings on any wholesale plan. Thus the producers of parts for the building industry (materials, accessories, conveniences) have made enormous progress, which has far outstripped the methods of assembly.

Modern methods of organization for efficiency and economical procedure in actual construction operations are applied in a high degree to large-scale urban projects (office buildings, facto-

ries, schools, hotels, luxury apartments, monumental public buildings, and so forth) and also to great engineering structures. Our Rockefeller Centers and our Boulder Dams are wonders of the modern world. Machine processes for excavation and assembly are common practice in such enterprises. But even in this field many handicraft methods persist.

Smaller buildings (houses, private garages, stores) — most numerous of all kinds, and reaching a much larger total investment than large urban buildings — are usually produced one at a time or a few at a time. The more expensive homes are designed by architects and built under general contract, the less costly ones designed and built by local builders, frequently men without much technical training. In addition to these tailor-made buildings of varying quality and price, we do produce some ready-made houses. Our housing developers, even the larger companies, nearly always produce for quick sale, and so at best build but a few houses at a time; a survey made in 1935 discovered only five home-building companies in the entire United States with capital of \$250,000 or more. They scarcely have developed to the point where they can achieve any important economies of large-scale production.

If Ford cars were assembled to order from special or plan-book designs by local mechanics, you would have a parallel to the home-building industry; most of the cars so produced would be poor in quality and much more costly than the factory-assembled product. The general run of medium-grade apartment buildings, usually built to secure a prosperous-looking rent roll and a speedy speculative sale, are produced in much the same way as are speculative small houses. This is the method the American people have used to produce capital assets valued at \$70,000,000,000 in 1930 — assets, although depreciating rapidly, valued at more than all the railroads,

automobiles, canals, other transportation facilities, and public utilities in the entire country. We could not have achieved this staggering result if we had not had many home builders who were intelligent and competent. Most of them have in recent years worked earnestly to produce quality houses at low cost, but they were not organized or capitalized as modern industrial units.

To modernize the assembly technique it is necessary to remove many obstacles inherited from the horse-and-buggy era. The distribution system for materials and equipment is principally geared to retail sale in small quantities. Our home-financing system is still in part a relic of the era of professional mortgage-foreclosers. Labor costs, based upon sporadic and seasonal employment with frequent lack of production-organization morale, are very high: workers earning 75 cents an hour can scarcely afford the product of workmen who get \$1.75 an hour, even though the 75-cents-an-hour man may earn more in a year than the \$1.75 man. Local building codes, formulated ostensibly in the interest of public safety, in actuality are only too often a legalized perpetuation of uneconomic and outworn structural procedures.

These matters have to do with the first two of the four elements of housing. The third factor, land, has grown to be an increasingly complicated and costly matter with the extension of urban communities, the increasing cost of urban community facilities, and the rapid and wasteful deterioration of urban residential neighborhoods. As our economic and social system has become more and more complicated, our housing production has tended more and more to become an adjunct to land speculation. In recent decades, the profits of subdividing raw land have tended to diminish to the vanishing point, and the addition of ready-made buildings to make the land sell at a profit has become more and more necessary. Speculative values of urban land have been legalized

by continually increasing assessments and bolstered up by fixed mortgages based upon speculative appraisals.

III

Some real progress has been made in the field of home financing. The Federal Home Loan Bank System has been set up and is growing daily in effectiveness and strength. It serves principally as a reserve system for its member institutions, which consist mainly of building and loan associations. Its sister institution, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, by doing its remarkable wholesale salvage job of refinancing a million defaulted home mortgages, probably advanced recovery in the construction industry by a full year, but it was not planned for instituting reforms in ordinary mortgage-lending procedure. The Federal Housing Administration, with its authority to insure home-mortgage loans up to 80 per cent of appraised value, has done much to popularize and greatly broaden the use of mortgages providing for monthly payments of interest and amortization, and to eliminate the obnoxious, extravagant, and unsound second mortgage which was in almost universal use in pre-depression days.

Mortgage insurance is a peculiarly American invention, which is serving a very useful purpose at this time, under competent administration. Other countries have not had it because most of them have well-organized home-financing systems; they do not have to offer lending institutions special inducements to do business in what they regard as one of the soundest known fields of investment, any more than we have to bribe Macy or Wanamaker or Marshall Field to sell us merchandise. It has been recognized that the original insurance surcharge of one half of one per cent on the face of the mortgage (amounting to 10 per cent over a twenty-year amortization period) is much too high, and legislation now before Congress would reduce

the insurance premium on smaller mortgages to a quarter of one per cent on declining balances. Even the higher rate charged until recently was less costly to borrowers than the old second-mortgage financing.

Interest rates on long-term investments are generally too high in America. We became accustomed to high rates when the country was a debtor nation and when speculative appreciation of capital values was looked to for final payment of a long-term loan, rather than current earnings of the pledged property. A cut of one per cent in the interest rate is equivalent, over a reasonable amortization period, to a 10 per cent cut in the cost of the property. It should be admitted that there are obstacles in the way of home-mortgage interest rates as low as those enjoyed in other more advanced countries. In England a \$4000 house sold on the installment plan can, upon default, be repossessed in a period of about six weeks at a cost of approximately fifty dollars; whereas in many of our forty-eight states it takes eighteen months for the mortgagee to gain possession, and it costs him four or five hundred dollars. By the time the mortgagee gains possession, the property is apt to have become so deteriorated from neglect that a considerable further expenditure must be made to put it in shape for resale. Consequently, every borrower must have added to the proper interest rate for rental of the money an insurance fee to cover the risks of default, the combined charge being customarily called interest. This is just one of the many uneconomic practices regarding real estate and mortgages that have been embedded in the laws of the land.

Our new governmental agencies for home financing, of which only two have been mentioned above, have done an excellent job so far. They have not been put together in a coördinated system, nor, with the exception of the provision (to be discussed later) in the National

Housing Act for insuring mortgages on large-scale housing projects, do they go beyond the financing of the individual small house. A very important purpose is being served, however, by popularizing amortized mortgages. Not only do they eliminate the vicious second mortgage and provide a better security than most mortgages have done before, but they make the mortgage loans of large lending institutions relatively liquid; they actually introduce a revolutionary concept into mortgage finance — the concept of long-term credit.

On the whole, we may say that home-mortgage financing is emerging from the horse-and-buggy stage into the horseless-carriage era, but that the streamlined home mortgage has not yet arrived in the United States.

IV

For a nation that almost invariably dodges its problems instead of solving them, these partial remedies of a bad mortgage-financing system represent real progress, though nowhere near enough. The trouble with us is that we are such inveterate believers in Santa Claus. We fall for all kinds of fairy tales told us by politicians who promise the more abundant life through curtailed production; promoters and advertising men who tell us how easy it is to keep up with the Joneses; statisticians who predict unprecedented booms based on selling millions of houses to people who have no money, and economists who advise letting nature take its course — 'nature,' presumably, consisting of tariffs, first-mortgage real-estate bonds, new-era stock-market speculation, and a financial system that throws the nation into bankruptcy just because it is rich.

Santa Claus has been expected to solve America's housing problem in several different ways, some of which have merit and real accomplishment to their credit, but none of which in itself is enough. Of these Santa Claus methods,

four have been outstanding: own-your-home campaigns, prefabricated houses, government subsidies, and an imaginary housing boom based on cycle theories and fragmentary nineteenth-century statistics.

Own-your-home campaigns, local and national, have been for a generation the favorite promotional device of the home builders. They have engaged strong community efforts, salesmanship, and public oratory in chamber-of-commerce meetings and legislative halls. Part of the time there was a valid sales argument in the slogan that it was cheaper to own than to pay rent; part of the time the arguments had to stress more strongly the sentimental and citizenship values of home ownership. Yet the percentage of American families who owned their own homes in 1930 was 46.8, against 47.8 in 1890; home ownership barely kept up with population growth. The intervening forty years constituted a period of change, continued migration of families from place to place, and increasing costs and burdens of home ownership. Urban population, as defined in the census, increased from 35 per cent of the total in 1890 to 56 per cent of the total in 1930. There is no evidence yet visible to indicate that employment will be more stable and economic opportunities more fixed geographically than they have been before. Sound and fitting as the desire may be to increase home ownership, the record to date does not show that such efforts offer a complete solution for housing our increasingly complex society.

It has not been so very long since prefabricated houses were commanding steady attention in the popular magazines and press. Would they be the solution to the problem? If assembly lines could turn out automobiles by the thousands and sell them cheap, then why could n't houses be produced the same way? It was rather generally intimated in the popular articles that it was only the excessive stupidity of archi-

fects and builders that had prevented this much-to-be-desired modern procedure — which overlooked the fact that prefabricated houses (called by the old-fashioned name of ‘ready-cut houses’) had enjoyed a profitable but limited market for rather a long time.

Several important factors were omitted in the acclamations that hailed the birth of the prefabrication idea. One was that you cannot produce the environmental factors of a house on an assembly line. Another was that you really had to get the new-style houses better and cheaper before you put them on the market in competition with houses built by conventional methods. Still another was that you could not get any real benefits of mass production until you created a mass market, which does not yet exist to any marked degree under our costly system of real-estate acquisition and our archaic system of home financing. Still other obstacles could be listed.

To-day the research investigators interested in prefabrication are taking a realistic view of its possibilities as a principle to be applied to structural units, equipment installations, and other physical elements of a building; they have already produced and offered to the market many improved products of great merit. They no longer expect to bring forth miracles overnight, but are willing to work patiently and watch their ideas and their plans evolve gradually as the housing needs of the people and their own opportunities develop. Prefabrication is widely accepted as a sound production principle, but the prefabricated house that will solve the housing problem quickly has not yet arrived.

But the favorite Santa Claus of recent years has, of course, been the government. Other countries have government housing, why not we? Why not let the government subsidize new houses for all the families that cannot pay the market price, regardless of what may happen to the large supply of existing

housing, regardless of cost, and regardless of the fact that, when the government pays, it is really the taxpaying public which pays? Many of the self-sustaining taxpayers who are supposed to pay for other peoples’ houses cannot afford new houses for themselves. Some proposals of the more enthusiastic advocates of unlimited government subsidy actually looked to housing more than half the population in new dwellings, with very considerable subsidies. Some of the PWA housing projects represented a capital cost per family greater than the 1930 value of the dwelling units occupied by two thirds to three fourths of all the families in communities where the public projects were built. Manifestly the public purse, which is the taxpayers’ purse, could not stand the strain of housing large numbers of families on any such scale. I doubt if the most enthusiastic advocate of government housing would claim that our government accomplished very much in the direction of cutting costs.

The fourth Santa Claus, the predicted housing boom, was not expected to bring with him any such prosaic programme as cutting costs; he was simply a promise of unprecedented prosperity, soaring real-estate values and stock-market prices, and new opportunities for many people to get rich if they knew how to get out of the market in time. That bubble did not blow up very large before it burst in the late spring of 1937. It was based on the theory of recurring cycles of real-estate and building speculation, without consideration of the demand factors that had produced speculative real-estate and building booms of the past — factors such as rapid growth of population, immigration, increased urbanization, expansion of railroads, the changing of America from a predominantly agricultural to a predominantly industrial nation, and, more recently, the coming of age of the automotive industry. These boom predictions ignored the fact that the United States is

to-day an adult nation, and that some of the phenomena of growth from childhood through adolescence to maturity are behind us and will not be repeated over and over again in the future. The golden age of real-estate speculation as the prime moving power in a nationwide building programme has passed.

V

If there are no miracles and if there is no Santa Claus, it is just possible that the American people may have to lick their housing problem by solving it, much as some other peoples have done. Our British cousins have done a very good job.

Following the finale of its speculative jerrybuilding era, England had an extended period of slack building, during which overcrowding of its working-class population increased to a point far beyond anything we have yet seen in this country. Following the World War, the housing shortage was acute, and building costs were very high, including the costs of materials, labor, and money. Private enterprise could not supply housing to the people who needed it at prices they could pay. A government programme of subsidized housing was started.

From 1920 to 1928, when subsidized housing dominated the British programme, the construction costs of four- and five-room houses were reduced 60 per cent. This reduction resulted in part from post-war deflation of prices, wages, and interest rates, but it also resulted from the introduction of large-scale housing production. The central government never built a single house. Nor did it look upon its builders and its business men as dumbbells and crooks. It opened up to them the field of large-scale public-housing operations and gave them the opportunity to develop a technique of large-scale production. Even shipbuilding companies undertook contracts for municipal housing projects.

By 1928 the cost of subsidy was very high and the cost of housing was low. The time was ripe for private industry, with its newly acquired proficiency, to take over the programme, which it did. From 1920 to 1928, 1,104,000 houses were built in Great Britain, 65 per cent of which had some kind of subsidy. From 1928 to 1932, the period of gradual withdrawal of subsidies, 752,000 houses were built, of which 45 per cent were subsidized. From 1932 to 1936, when subsidy was confined to municipal housing built for relief of overcrowding, 1,113,000 houses were built, with only 18 per cent of them subsidized. The large British home-building companies are modern industrial organizations, with a known market, a quality product priced right, and an ideal system of financing purchases. Two hundred dollars down and five dollars a week will buy a house in the outskirts of London; they are a little cheaper in the provinces. Home-building companies build and sell one or two thousand houses a year in planned-community developments; some of the companies have their stocks listed on the exchanges. When the British people faced a national need of major magnitude, they did not hire a lot of people to shriek to high heaven that there was bound to be a Santa Claus. They looked the facts squarely in the face, they got to work, they created an industry to do the job that needed to be done.

Other fine examples of practical accomplishment can be found in other European countries. Sweden is one in which private enterprise, encouraged by local and central governments and stimulated by favorable home financing, has produced noteworthy results.

There is evidence to-day of the beginning of modern industrial organization and technique for producing housing in the United States. I refer to some important new developments in the field of private enterprise.

For a long time we have had in this

country such a thing as investment housing, built to earn an income return by the renting of decent dwelling accommodations to families of moderate means. The City and Suburban Homes Company of New York, founded by Mr. R. Fulton Cutting and Associates in 1896, has paid dividends continuously for the last thirty-seven years at an average annual rate of 4.65 per cent. The Washington Sanitary Improvement Company (a housing development, in spite of its curious name), in the capital city, paid annual dividends of 5 per cent continuously from 1897 to 1923, and 6 per cent per annum from 1923 to the present time, including every depression year. The Washington Sanitary Housing Company has paid 5 per cent per annum continuously through the past ten years. Six non-coöperative apartment projects built in New York City under the New York State Housing Board have all been consistent dividend payers in good times and bad. Chatham Village in Pittsburgh, until quite recently the finest planned-community project in America that was built as an investment to supply rental housing to medium-income families, opened its doors in January 1932. It had 98 per cent occupancy in six weeks, and has never had less than that. It has earned and paid a substantial dividend during each depression year.

I should like to ask some of my Wall Street friends to compare these earnings records with those of our leading railroads and industrial companies. Unfortunately, housing projects of this kind have been given an unattractive name. We call them 'limited-dividend companies'; we ought to call them 'stabilized-dividend companies' or 'guaranteed-dividend companies.' In housing, as in many other fields, learning to call things by their right names is frequently the beginning of wisdom.

Special provision for encouraging investment housing of this type was made in the National Housing Act. The Fed-

eral Housing Administration is authorized to insure mortgages on such projects of any size up to \$10,000,000. Twenty such projects have been completed or put under construction; four more have had their financing plans approved, and many more applications for mortgage loans and mortgage insurance are being considered. These are private-enterprise projects without subsidy. Sixteen of the mortgages have been taken by three of our leading life-insurance companies. The standards of construction, of community planning, and of non-speculative financing imposed by the large-scale housing division of FHA, under the direction of Mr. Miles Colean, are such as to guarantee sound investment even if there were no FHA mortgage insurance. Investment housing is a going business in America, and has been recognized as such by the emphasis placed upon it in current legislation before Congress, which aims at liberalizing the mortgage financing of such projects though it does not provide means of securing working capital for home-building companies.

But the progress story of investment housing does not end here. Several months ago Mr. Charles F. Lewis made an address before the housing conference sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. Mr. Lewis is the father of the Chatham Village project in Pittsburgh, already described as the finest middle-income rental project in America up to this time. Mr. Lewis stated that he had that morning inspected the Buckingham Community at Arlington, Virginia, and he said of it, 'This beautifully planned project promises to be one of the most significant of all that have been constructed in America to date.'

Buckingham, one of the new FHA-insured enterprises, is unique among housing projects. It is being financed, constructed, and operated by an automobile manufacturer, who has for the first time brought the manufacturer's

technique into the field of housing production. By applying to this new job his previous experience in producing assembled cars, he has effected economies in buying, construction, and management that enable him to offer to Washington families with incomes of \$1500 to \$3000 a year far better values for their rent dollars than they ever got before. The first section of the project, partly completed and occupied, will have 622 dwelling units. The complete project will house 2000 families and will cost about \$8,000,000. The late Allie S. Freed, President of Paramount Motors Corporation, Chairman of the Committee for Economic and Social Progress, Inc., and producer of Buckingham, once stated that he could fill 20,000 units to-morrow if he had them to offer. It is believed that Buckingham is destined to serve as the pattern for many more rental-housing projects.

VI

In this country we are finding our first opportunity for large-scale housing operations in the rental field. In Great Britain the private-enterprise programme has consisted entirely of small houses for sale. This important difference can be readily explained. In England only 25 per cent of the families owned their own homes in 1930, compared with nearly 50 per cent of American families in the same year. Great Britain has already achieved a streamlined home-financing system. When we have so perfected our financing procedure that we can offer to well-capitalized home-building companies a mass market for homes built to sell, the home-ownership phase of large-scale production will get under way. At this time middle-income rental housing appears to be one of the best possible investments for the funds of American life-insurance companies, the institutions best equipped, at the moment, to finance such operations.

It is rather generally recognized now

that the most desirable production of housing is the planned residential community, whether the accommodations be for sale or for rent or both. Chatham Village and Buckingham were both planned with large open spaces and other modern amenities by the late Henry Wright, probably the most distinguished land-planning expert we have yet had in this country. In this way the environmental elements of good housing are provided, and neighborhood depreciation and blight avoided. When Mr. Freed was manufacturing automobiles, his assembly line was in the factory; when he manufactured housing he put his assembly line on the site, much as the British home builders do; he made two trips to England to study their procedure.

The Buckingham project developed a 'Ford unit' suite of three rooms and a bath, so called because it was the size most in demand and, in its finally developed form, most easily repeated in large numbers in buildings of varying sizes and shapes. Buckingham also developed one U-shaped group of five buildings arranged about an open court, susceptible of being copied as a single small investment project or grouped in large community developments of either gridiron or irregular plan. Along with a reasonable amount of standardization, monotony was avoided by varying house plans, plot arrangements, exterior wall treatments, and entrance motives.

Continuous housing production by the same planning and construction organization would tend toward successive reductions of the cost of assembly. A considerable number of Chatham Villages and Buckinghams under erection at the same time would offer to building-product manufacturers the mass markets they need for their prefabricated structural and equipment units and thus help them to get their costs down. Furthermore, continuous production based upon a continuous flow of mortgage money and a continuous turn-

over of working capital would also permit continuous employment of building labor at a guaranteed monthly or annual rate and thus eliminate one of the present elements of high building costs, and would increase labor's efficiency enormously. Mr. J. W. Laing, of John Laing and Son, Ltd., London, one of Britain's largest home builders, has with his big general contracting business and his production of small houses for sale (9000 of them in the past five years) kept an organization of 3000 people at steady work; he told me on the day we inspected Buckingham together that in his first year of home-building operations he reduced his labor cost one third without reducing the hourly rate.

Large-scale housing projects like this offer exciting, practical possibilities with great promise for the future. They are no universal panacea. They will find their logical place in the larger metropolitan centres of the country and their suburbs, and to less degree in smaller communities. They are probably not destined to supplant established procedures in the building field, at least not with spectacular quickness; they will evolve gradually at first. If they act to reduce building costs by industrializing home building, the economies and innovations they engender will benefit all building. If they actually create a new market in the lower-cost brackets, they will ultimately add to the nation's prosperity and thus tend to increase the market for custom-tailored buildings in the higher price ranges.

The Buckingham project, which is being developed entirely under the financial and managerial responsibility of Mr. Freed's company, was sponsored by the Committee for Economic and Social Progress, Inc., to demonstrate that it is possible for private enterprise to produce without subsidy new housing for families with annual incomes as low as \$1500 a year. Of the first four hundred tenant families, three fourths have incomes ranging from \$1500 to \$3000 a

year, the remaining one fourth having larger incomes. A considerable range of suite sizes and of rentals was deliberately planned, in order to avoid the institutional character of a stratified income-level community. It seems entirely possible that continued effort along the Buckingham lines will eventually bring rents down to the capacity of families with \$1200 a year, perhaps ultimately \$1000 a year—subject, of course, to variations in local construction standards and costs.

Nearly everyone to-day who is anxious to see the greatest possible progress of private enterprise in the housing field grants that housing of decent minimum standards for families with incomes under \$1000 cannot be supplied without financial assistance to a great many such families. However, many people who are sincerely desirous of doing everything practical and possible to raise the living standards of these poorer families do not see the necessity of housing them on very expensive land (which most slum land is to-day) or of building for them expensive model apartments of institutional character. One survey of New York's slum families disclosed that half of those questioned would much prefer simple cottages in the outskirts to suites in model tenements; their wishes could be met at a moderate capital cost and with a moderate amount of rent assistance so long as they could not pay the full economic rent. One hardship of the poor families of our cities has been the lack of a range of choice as to where they may live and rear their children.

The United States Housing Act of 1937, with its provision for annual contributions provided jointly by Federal and state or local governments, makes a rent-subsidy system possible and likely to be tried out. This has worked successfully in a number of cities in England. Under rent subsidy the municipal housing project operates in the black, by charging a full economic rent; fam-

ilies needing rent assistance receive it, according to their needs and just as long as they actually do need it, from a pooled welfare fund; the neighbors do not even have to know which families are being assisted and which ones are not. In most of our cities there are doubtless numbers of old buildings that can be quite adequately and attractively modernized to a very decent standard, which may be done by private enterprise with FHA-insured mortgages or by municipal housing authorities with local and Federal government aid. These are a few suggestions as to practical ways of meeting the problem of decent housing for poor families. But there is no single solution. The need is real and must be properly met.

Slum clearance will usually mean demolition of old unfit houses, requiring the building of new houses on the old sites or elsewhere. Frequently the cleared land may be more suitable for middle-income housing, commercial development, parks, playgrounds, or parking spaces than for subsidy housing. This is really a problem of city replanning. It is difficult to see why the Federal Government should take any direct responsibility for slum clearance. Municipalities, which have long collected taxes from slum property on high assessed valuations, might very properly be expected to share the cost of slum clearance, perhaps by acquisition and development of land for open-space purposes.

VII

If the economic realists are coming to the front in housing and bringing their much-needed practicality and business efficiency to the solution of the central problem of costs, they as realists must recognize that their more idealistic friends were first to dramatize the need and insist upon a housing programme. There is to-day a greater possibility of substantial advance in raising the standards of American family and community life through partnership of private business, social welfare agencies, and government than there has ever been before.

We now realize that our era of rapid industrialization and of real-estate speculation produced civilization only as a by-product. To-day the job of civilizing America through intensive development of our facilities for production and improvement of our facilities for living is the paramount national objective. By improving the quality of family and community life we can engender that prosperity to which our resources in men, money, materials, and management so richly entitle us. But only if we can be patient! You plant some seed, you water, you fertilize, and you keep the garden free from weeds, and then you wait a bit, because you cannot harvest your crop next Tuesday. But when the planting and the cultivating have been done well, what a crop the harvest time can bring!

FROM HOLLYWOOD TO PARIS

Charles Laughton and I

BY ELSA LANCHESTER

I

AFTER the Old Vic season had finished, Charles and I went to Hollywood once more, and again at short notice. In fact, it seems that whenever we have gone to or come from Hollywood we have never had more than ten hours' notice. We have always packed in a hurry, and they have been the most horrible times I have ever lived through. Women hate packing hurriedly because they have to pack dirty as well as clean clothes. One expects dirty frocks, and so forth, at the end of a long journey, but it is most disheartening to have to start off with them.

We went by the fastest possible boat to New York, stayed one night, and took the plane early the next morning for Hollywood. At Chicago we were met by Thornton Wilder, a great friend of ours, and one of the best companions one could have. He is a professor at the University of Chicago and has a passionate love of the theatre. For years he has followed important productions all over the world. He gets the programmes, and he knows who played Othello in 1928 in Berlin, who played Hamlet in 1926 in London, and so forth. He is a sort of walking theatrical *Who's Who*.

The first part I did during this visit to Hollywood was a little bit in *David Copperfield* under my M-G-M contract, and then I played in *Naughty Marietta*. Next I had those two very good parts in *The Bride of Frankenstein*. In

one rôle I was the female monster: not actually ugly, but with a terrifying, sculptural sort of make-up. The other rôle was that of Mary Shelley, who was sweet and gentle. It was marvelous for me really, because there was such variety in these two parts that everyone could see what I could do. The difficulty in starting on a career, if you are a character actress, is to let people see the breadth and the range of your work.

In *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* Charles got to like Norma Shearer enormously, and, as he also liked Irving Thalberg, it was very pleasant. I did not meet Norma Shearer for some time, but he used to come home with stories of what a nice human being she was. They appeared to have a continuous round of food during *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*. They used to have Canadian bacon and marmalade on fried bread when she got on the set in the morning. Apparently Norma has a colossal appetite, because, after the bacon and marmalade, at about eleven o'clock they would have soup, and so on. She used to turn cartwheels on the set, so obviously the food did not serve as ballast. Charles says she turns very good cartwheels.

Her manner is exceedingly friendly and good; she never slips over the edge. I mean, when I laugh I sometimes make too much noise — you know the feeling. All Norma's actions and movements and

her gayety are really restrained. In fact, it is like perfectly timed acting; she is a good timer in life. The parties at her house were the only ones at which I quickly felt at home — a very, very easy household to move about in.

I particularly remember one party at her house on the Santa Monica beach. Most of the houses there have a swimming pool of fresh or salt water, according to what people want, and a little garden and sand of their own. There is a right-of-way between the sea and the fence at the bottom of the garden. On one night of the year — sometimes two — when the moon is full, a strange thing happens along the Pacific Coast. Little fish called grunions come up in great numbers to breed. They come in on to the beach and stand on their tails, twiddle round, and go back to deep water. They are about six inches long, and it is a lovely sight to see them. The local people come and catch them; they more or less know what night the grunions are 'running,' but sometimes the fish come in and go back before people are aware of what is happening.

Things like that interest me very much, but, like people in London who have never been to see the Tower, Hollywood folk are not much interested in the grunions. One night when we were at the Thalbergs' house I saw Jean Harlow — whom everybody loved so much — with one of these little fish in her hand. It was alive, and she put it into a bowl of flowers. I knew it was not a fresh-water fish and that it would die, so I thought it had better go back into the sea. I took it out of the bowl of flower water and rushed into the garden and down on to the beach. Then I discovered that the beach was covered with grunions, and that people were catching them in their hands and in handkerchiefs. I had taken my shoes off and had my evening dress up round my knees. Knowing Charles would be madly interested, I dashed back into the house, crying: 'The grunions are running! The grunions are running!'

Nobody took any notice except Charles, and Jeanette MacDonald. We all three dashed out and paddled about in the water. The sea was so full of grunions that it seemed as if one's legs were being massaged by them. We did not try to catch any. We just watched them go up on to the beach, twiddle round on their tails, and slip back again.

On Christmas Eve I got rather too merry. It was then that I got to like Hollywood. Before that I had not liked it, but for me that Christmas Eve was a great moment. Van Dyke, who directed *Naughty Marietta*, gave an enormous open-house party. He often gave such parties, and absolutely anyone could turn up. The house was crammed on such occasions. I had a very popular American drink called, I think, 'Old Fashioned' — it has whiskey and sugar in it. Sugar in whiskey makes it more alcoholic, or something. It was the first time I had tasted an Old Fashioned.

I have a comic face which perhaps a painter might like — I don't know; but, as it is an unusual face, when I am among a lot of beautiful women I have an inferiority complex about it. At this party I got very gay, and I suppose I looked natural and therefore nicer; important people flung their arms around me. That was almost too much for me. When you have been in a place for months and are miserable, and people suddenly look at you as if you were the only woman in the world, it does you good. Anyway, from then on I thought, 'Well, I may not be a beautiful blonde, but I am something.' It gave me confidence. Charles took me home at exactly the right moment. Since then I have never disliked Hollywood.

II

Ruggles of Red Gap had been chosen for Charles's final commitment with Paramount. He was immediately attracted by the story, and was keen to do it. However, when he came out of the hospital the script of *Ruggles* was not

ready, and he had been persuaded during his illness to do Micawber in *David Copperfield*. Scripts of productions are always weeks late; it cannot be helped. Since the script of *David Copperfield* was ready, M-G-M got permission from Paramount to borrow Charles for the part of Micawber.

On the face of it, Micawber seemed to be a wonderful part for Charles. He set about the make-up, and had the whole of his hair shaved off. In the end he really did look like Micawber. Hugh Walpole and George Cukor saw the silent test. They and everybody else agreed that Charles just was Micawber: his every movement, the walking stick, the top hat, were all that is associated with the character. But Charles realized when it came to speaking the lines that he did not have the necessary quality for the part. He felt that it needed a music-hall technique which he did not have. He started the film, but persuaded David Selznick, and quite rightly, that he was not suitable for it. Eventually W. C. Fields did it with great success.

It is very unpleasant for an actor to discover that he cannot get into a character, and have to beg people for whom he is working to release him. M-G-M did not at first agree with Charles, because they thought he was good, but Charles felt he was not.

During the wait for *Ruggles* we went out to Palm Springs, the resort in the desert one hundred and twenty miles from Hollywood which is a playground for film people. The town is not a very picturesque place. There are large hotels, palm trees, swimming pools, and every modern convenience. When you get up in the morning you feel you have to put smart clothes on. When I say 'smart clothes,' everybody will say, 'Oh, but you just wear slacks; put on an old jersey and a pair of sneakers and go out.' But the trouble is that there is a smart way of wearing slacks. In England we get up and sit around in dressing gowns and pyjamas, or we put on a

rather old pair of gray flannel trousers and brogues. Yet in Palm Springs I could not have gone out in sloppy clothes without attending to the final details of make-up. In fact, it is smart slovenliness. You wear slacks with an air. All the talk about 'wearing anything' is nonsense; people are very careful how they look easy in Palm Springs.

At last, however, Charles came back to do *Ruggles of Red Gap*. This was one of the best times we have had. The company all liked each other; everyone was exceedingly happy and the 'rushes' came out well. But they began to have doubts about the picture towards the end. It seemed to be a bit sophisticated, somehow; they were introducing English jokes to Americans, and jokes about the Middle West to English folk. They started to think, 'Well, maybe in England they won't understand the American gags.' They had doubts about the national characteristics they had introduced. They need not have worried. Both countries laughed at both lots of gags, and it made a most successful film.

After this Charles and I were both working in separate studios. I was the *Bride of Frankenstein* and he was Javert in *Les Misérables*. We both used to get home in the evening, dog-tired, and talk about what we had done during the day. Whether we listened to each other I do not know, but it makes things go happily when one is able to give an exact recital of how Mr. X had twenty 'takes' and so on.

I think Charles gave one of his best performances as Javert in *Les Misérables*. He represented the law pursuing its course by rule of thumb rather than by any individual choice. Javert's own private conscience turns on him in the end, and he realizes that possibly the law may be wrong. Then he commits suicide by jumping into the river. Charles got rather tired of wading through mud, slime, and so on in the sewer scenes; it was pretty realistic. I remember that on the United Artists lot he had a dress-

ing room, sitting room, bathroom, and kitchen — a whole flat — and he could have had a cook if he had wished.

At M-G-M the stars choose to be in tiny dressing rooms about twelve feet by seven. There are rows and rows of them. One walks about a quarter of a mile to get from one end of them to the other. Some smart ones have been built, but most of the stars are sorry to give up their old dressing rooms as they progress up the ladder. They get used to them, and know exactly where to get the best light for make-up. Charles has gone from one dressing room to another; he started with a very simple one at Paramount and finished up with a very smart one.

For character make-ups one goes to the make-up room, where all the yards of crêpe hair are hung out. Crêpe hair comes in a plait, and when it is unplaited it is frizzy and curly. It is dipped in water, and a weight is hung on the end to get it straight. Of course most face fungus that has to be put on has to have a bit of fuzz. This is not real human hair. Most of the human hair is used for wigs, and comes, I believe, from Russia and the East. Black hair can be bleached to any color. Of course there are various sorts of animal hair, too.

There is only one thing to make frizzy hair like mine straight — a Japanese wood which is most difficult to get over here. You soak it in a jar of water for six hours; then you remove the wood and smear the thin glue-like liquid on to your hair. It can then be set straight, or in sausage rolls, or in marcel waves, according to taste. While I have been a martyr to hair-straightening processes, Charles has rarely been in a film without going through much more complicated tortures. The make-up room to him must seem more like an operating theatre, what with Henry VIII's beard, Nero's nose, Mr. Barrett's side whiskers, and Captain Bligh's eyebrows. It is always a pleasant shock to see him as himself between films.

III

During the filming of *Mutiny on the Bounty* Charles spent much of the time on Catalina Island, which lies about twenty miles off the coast of Los Angeles. Although in the picture Charles went to Tahiti, he did not do so in reality. The native girls shown in the picture went to Tahiti, but it is expensive to send stars on such a long journey, so 'process shots' are taken. You see Clark Gable, for instance, talking to a girl on the beach at Tahiti; she was there but he was not. That is one of the secrets of the screen. They get a man to practise Clark Gable's walk, and they make a long shot of him walking on the beach and sitting down with the girl in Tahiti. Next they make a close-up of the real Clark Gable against a Tahitian background projected on a screen: this is what is called a process shot or back projection. Then they bring the girl to Hollywood from Tahiti and do closer shots of the two of them in front of the processed Tahiti background. After that they cut back to a long shot of Clark Gable's double, and so finally you cannot tell that Clark Gable is not walking on the beach and sitting down beside the girl in Tahiti.

In the shooting of the wreck of the *Pandora* in *Mutiny on the Bounty* one of the camera boys was drowned after the *Pandora* wreckage scene had been shot, when some rafts were being towed back by tugs. One of the rafts got into the trough of a wave; a tank was torn off the deck, and the raft sank. The whole thing was nobody's fault.

I was in England at the time, and the first I heard of it was when a London newspaper telephoned me and asked, 'Can you please tell us if your husband is all right?' I replied, 'As far as I know, yes. Why, what's the matter?' They said: 'The *Bounty* has sunk and rumors are coming through that several people have been drowned.'

Fortunately, previous to that Charles had told me in a cable, not apropos of

anything, 'If you hear any rumors of accidents, don't take any notice.' There is a lot of stunt publicity around a picture like *Mutiny on the Bounty*, and any little accident that happens gets turned into a sensation. I bought an evening paper and saw that the *Bounty* had sunk — it was big headline news for one evening paper. But Charles was not on the boat, he did n't see it happen, and it was not the *Bounty* anyway! The newspapers hoped to be able to say, 'Mrs. Laughton screamed and fainted at the other end of the wire,' or 'Mrs. Laughton yelled: "My God, he is dead!"'

Actually I did not take any notice at all, fortunately. I said, 'I have heard nothing. I am sure it is quite all right,' very meekly and mildly. But I did not like the simple way they said: 'Have you heard about your husband?' It was rather frightening.

While I was in England I occupied myself at our country cottage with my eight-millimetre movie camera. I made four funny shorts with my two friends, John Armstrong (who designed the costumes for some Korda productions) and Benita Jaeger, who is my closest woman friend. When Charles was at last coming home we spent hectic evenings cutting these little pictures so that they would be finished in time for him to see on his first night home.

We called ourselves 'Country Film Productions, Ltd.' The titles of our films were *Mother India*, *Parlez-Moi d'Amour*, *The Sleeping Clergyman*, and *Whither Tarzan* — we still show them, but only to friends. Benita, John, and I got frantically professional at this time, and, I can tell you, a little temperamental also. But we all know one another so well that it did n't matter.

With regard to story values in films, years ago when I had first met Charles, H. G. Wells wrote three shorts for me. Although I say 'wrote,' he really did not. I met him, and the first thing he said to the company was, 'Elsa blows a whistle.' That's all — and that was one story.

The effect of my face seen blowing a whistle and the results of the blowing of it — the world of officialdom that I brought down on my head — constituted the whole story, and represented for the films something much more valuable than pages of words about how and why and when.

IV

It was about August 1934 that Charles returned from America after *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Korda was proposing to do *Cyrano de Bergerac*, but, however much the author of the script and those adapting it worked upon it, they did not seem to be able to get a satisfactory shooting script out of it. They clung to *Cyrano* all through the autumn and winter; costumes were designed and Charles had various fittings, but finally the subject had to be dropped and no other script was ready to take its place.

Now I'm sorry to talk about 'my operations,' but just think of the pleasure it gives me not to have anyone to shut me up, although of course you can skip this bit if you wish. I was in London with nothing to do and decided to visit Charles's family in Scarborough. We — that is, Benita Jaeger and John Armstrong and I — set off in the car intending to make a leisurely trip, a chauffeur driving. But seven miles outside York we collided with a 'dangerous driver,' and you know what that means. The little film actress (that's me) was the only one to get a scratch. John and Benita would certainly have suffered from shock, but they had to look after me, and so did n't. I had a cut about the same size as my mouth through my left eyebrow, and, thinking I might become unconscious or faint, I sat by the roadside and said: 'No one must touch me except George. . . . Benita, have you got a pencil? Write his name down at once.' 'George' is the most famous plastic surgeon in Europe, and I must confess that I had this sentence prepared before the accident occurred, on the

'you never know' principle. I did n't faint, and eventually we got a lift to York Hospital, where I was cleaned up. George was playing golf somewhere and was reached by Benita on the telephone. She also reached Charles in Monte Carlo and he started back immediately — he did n't even bring a hat. I traveled back to London that night, and so did George.

I often like to tell my friends about 'the accident,' but they don't take any notice. I point to my scar, but they can't see it. Why should they? I can't see it myself — sometimes I wish I could.

This was the longest period that Charles has ever been unoccupied. If we had known we were going to have ten idle months, Charles and I would have done what we have always wanted to do: traveled round the world on board ship. But from week to week, day to day, discussions and arguments went on, subjects came up and were turned down, and authors were employed to see if they could make the subjects turn in the right direction.

So Charles and I stayed at home to wait for these ten months to pass — a long bite out of an actor's life; they were trying days.

We spent most of our time in the country, in our four-room cottage. We have two rooms, and the couple who look after us have the other two. It is only twenty-eight miles from London, and stands in the centre of a thirty-two-acre wood, which is, again, in the middle of six thousand acres privately owned and kept chiefly for shooting purposes. The railway station we use is six and one-half miles from our cottage.

Once some people rang up and said: 'We are going to have a paper chase, and we have made your cottage the end. Would you please give your autograph to the winner?' Charles said, 'Certainly not,' because if one person found his or her way to the cottage, dozens would be coming along. On a day like August Bank holiday we might see a hiker or

two go through the wood, but usually we see hardly a soul. We get up, have breakfast, and walk for miles without meeting anyone. We don't mind if it is rainy or gray or muddy — we just plod through it.

Once we met a couple of girls wheeling a tandem bicycle, and a little time after they had passed us we heard one of them come panting along behind. It was a girl with spectacles and plus-fours. She said, 'Excuse me, my friend's ever so soppy, but she says you are Charles Laughton. You are n't, are you?' Charles said, 'Yes, I am,' and she at once said, 'You are n't,' and when he repeated, 'Yes, I am,' she said again, 'You're not,' then turned tail and fled back to her friend like a rabbit, saying, 'Oo-er . . .' 'My friend's ever so soppy' has become a sort of gag in our house.

V

At last began the preparation of *Rembrandt*. It arrived as an original script by Karl Zuckmeyer, but, as he was a German, it had to be adjusted to the English-speaking point of view. It was obviously something Karl Zuckmeyer felt deeply about and did a good job on, but the sentimental parts of the German script did somehow stick in the mouths of English-speaking people — I mean German sentiment as apart from English sentiment. It is not a matter of translation, but of adjustment. That took a great deal of time.

Meanwhile, Charles was invited by the Comédie Française to act the part of Sganarelle in Act II of Molière's *Le Médecin malgré lui* at a midnight gala performance which the Comédie Française gives annually, when not only the permanent company do selections from the most popular plays, but distinguished visitors are also invited to act. This was the first occasion on which an English actor had been asked to join them in a play as one of themselves, and not as a separate turn on the pro-

gramme. It was a great honor and very alarming. The Comédie Française has been in existence for three hundred years, and Charles was the first Englishman to be invited into this select company. He was exceedingly pleased about the invitation, but as the time drew nearer he became steadily more scared.

He went over to Paris with Alice Gachet, whom he credits with teaching him more about acting than anyone else. He worked under her while he was a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and, as Charles says, anyone who wants to go on the stage should go and be taught by her. She still teaches there, and she has spotted many famous people, including John Gielgud, Robert Harris, Celia Johnson, and so forth.

For four or five days before the performance Alice and he rehearsed with the company, and privately with one or two members of the company in the evenings. It was very nice of them all to rehearse so much with Charles, considering they had all been playing the parts for a long time and knew them backwards.

When Charles arrived for rehearsal he found people pointing toes, and clicking fingers, and saying, 'One-two-three-ah.' Not being one who acts by these methods, he was scared out of his wits, because he realized it was entirely different from what he had been accustomed to. When he found these slick people dancing round him, not an inch out of place, not a quarter of a second off time, while he has been in the habit of groaning and moaning his way through characterizations until he reaches the truth he has been looking for, he was almost in despair. By the time I arrived in Paris he was a nervous wreck, more like a person living in the middle of a nightmare than a human being. He was in one of those moods when every time he took a taxi he hoped that a collision or some other accident would occur before the dread night. All actors have experienced that feeling; they would not commit suicide,

yet if death came accidentally and honorably they would be glad.

When the night of the performance came it was an exceedingly painful experience, because Charles had not been able to eat or sleep, and was just living in a state of nervous tension. The performance began at midnight; there was nothing to do but to have late dinner, try to sleep, have a thimbleful of champagne at a time, and then go to the theatre. In that nervous condition on first nights you do not feel so bad when you reach the theatre and are sitting in your dressing room surrounded by make-up. One layer of nerves is, as it were, deadened, just as when you go on to the stage all your nervousness vanishes. Sometimes it returns in the middle of the show for a short while. Anyway, Charles had a period of prolonged agony because it was a midnight matinee, and as the act from Molière was the star piece of the evening it was put right at the end of the programme. Also the show started late, as shows always do in France.

The programme was marvelous. I sat in a box with the Director of the Comédie Française. In France a distinguished actor is awarded the Légion d'Honneur and is called *maître*. The leading posts of honor in the theatrical world are held by the leading actors of the Comédie. I sat in the box with some of the more venerable representatives, but naturally I did not enjoy the performance much because I knew Charles was moaning in his dressing room on the other side of the proscenium. When at last his particular part of the show came on I was near enough to see the beads of sweat on his forehead, and the agony in his eye.

Charles had one of the most horrifying experiences that any actor can have who is used to pointing a phrase with a gesture in the theatre, knowing where the laughs are to come. He spoke the enormously long tirade in Act II, and the whole of the speech was received in stony silence. At the very last line the audience

cheered for several minutes. Nobody had told him that during the famous passages in Molière the Comédie audiences, knowing them by heart, remain completely silent to receive their full savor.

Alex Korda had come over, and we mooched around in the intervals. I remember I was very thirsty, but could not get a drink of water anywhere. They certainly did n't seem to have a bar in the Comédie Française, but perhaps it was shut, as it was midnight. Nerves are inclined to make one thirsty and I know I was uncomfortable for at least three hours; my tongue was parched and sticking to the roof of my mouth. When the play was over we went behind the scenes. Charles was surrounded by people as relieved as he was that it was all over. There were flashlight photographs, champagne and flowers. When we got out of the theatre I suppose it was about five o'clock in the morning. Everybody said Charles was marvelous, and, considering he is an Englishman who had only had four days' rehearsal, he was marvelous. But he knows, and I know, it was not a thoroughly good performance.

From both his point of view and mine, considering the sort of actor he is, he neither fitted in nor achieved success in his own method of acting. We read the newspapers afterwards and felt rather sad. It is, of course, the critics' job to criticize, but if Charles rehearsed hard and gave a good performance on the stage to-day and really did create something good, he would not be treated as an actor acting but as a star starring. When Charles went over to Paris to play at the Comédie Française and was under-rehearsed, the critics who went over there all lauded him and declared his acting wonderful.

The whole of Paris seemed to be waiting on the pavement when we left the theatre. People were on their way to work; maybe that's why there were so

many of them: young shopgirls, young workmen and office boys. Charles and I, Beatrix Lehmann, Alex Korda, and Alice Gachet, the five of us, got into a taxi and returned to our hotel and held a post-mortem. We were wide-awake with relief, although we all had black rings round our eyes. My eyes looked like stewed prunes on burnt toast. We ordered breakfast. After breakfast the men decided, on the spur of the moment, to go to Holland to soak themselves in atmosphere for *Rembrandt*. So I packed for Charles like a madwoman — one of those beastly jobs when you have taken enough away for four or five days in Paris, and then want something suitable for three days' traveling by car. Dirty clothes have to be considered in a new light. I was in full evening dress and drinking black coffee.

Charles was loaded with souvenirs given to him by the French company. We still have them, and they are greatly valued. One we love very much is a little dish painted by Renoir, which someone sacrificed to Charles because of his gesture in coming to Paris to act. He kept the purse that he had used in the play with stage money in it, and someone gave him a ring with Cyrano's head on it, not knowing that the Cyrano film project was already buried in the past. There were also two paintings, a couple of drawings, a lot of books, and copies of plays that the Comédie Française had done, signed by members of the company. He had a book of their history signed by the entire company from the wardrobe mistress up to the leading actors. They were charming people, and seemed to have such high spirits compared to most other actors. Once you are in the Comédie Française, the public cannot discard you like an old glove. It is a life appointment. Where other actors possibly worry as to what is going to happen to them when they grow old, these people fall off the stage like autumn leaves — which is a nice system.

(To be concluded)

THE LIGHT COMES BRIGHTER

BY THEODORE ROETHKE

THE light comes brighter from the east; the caw
Of restive crows is sharper on the ear.
A walker at the river's edge may hear
A cannon crack announce an early thaw.

The sun cuts deep into the heavy drift,
Though guarded snow may still be winter-sealed.
At bridgeheads buckled ice begins to shift,
The river overflows the level field.

Once more the trees assume familiar shapes,
Their branches drop last vestiges of snow.
The water stored in narrow pools escapes
In rivulets; the cold roots stir below.

Soon field and wood will wear an April look,
The frost be gone, for green is breaking now;
The ovenbird will match the vocal brook,
The young fruit swell upon the pear-tree bough.

And soon a branch, part of a hidden scene,
The leafy mind, that long was tightly furled,
Will turn its private substance into green,
And young shoots spread upon our inner world.

STANDARDS OF LIVING

Notes for an Article

BY GERARD SWOPE

[In the course of a recent trip to Europe, Mr. Swope, President of the General Electric Company, made some swift comparisons of the standards of living on the Continent and in the United States. His notes seemed so pertinent that the *Atlantic* asked for the privilege of printing them without delay. — THE EDITOR]

I

CONDITIONS in England are good. Business is prosperous, large in volume and profitable in operation. There is no social unrest, no acute labor troubles. The work week is 47 hours, and rates of pay are more or less stabilized. Taxes are high, but the budget is balanced. Changes in fiscal and industrial policy have been made gradually over a long period of years and are generally accepted by all.

Across the Channel, in France, radical changes were made in rates of pay and hours of work (40 hours per week), which industry was not able to absorb so rapidly. As a result, costs rose, consumption fell, and unemployment grew, with an accompanying social unrest which has not been allayed, and in consequence industrial activity has not been resumed. Since I was there, there has been a distinct movement to modify the original decrees, both in length of work week and in rates of pay.

Elsewhere in Europe, even in the discussions of the International Labor

Board at Geneva, there is practically no agitation for a shorter work week, which throughout Europe, with the exception of France, is 47 hours and longer.

Here in the United States, over a period of time and particularly recently, we have made rapid changes in the reduction of the work week and increased rates of pay, which industry has been able to absorb through the simplification of designs, better methods and greater mechanization of industry, and the ingenuity of management. Changes in a complex and far-flung organization must be made gradually, if they are to be absorbed without increasing costs and selling prices. As an example of our progress, in the short space of my own active working life there have been great changes. When I started work in 1895, our work week was 56 hours at 12½ cents an hour, or \$7.00 a week. To-day a young man of about the same grade would work 40 hours (25 per cent less) and receive 70 cents an hour, or almost six times as much. The General Electric Company went to a five-day week in 1931, for both offices and factories. Incidentally, the Exchange in England is on a five-day week.

The wages and hours bill now being considered by Congress would not affect the hours or the wage rates of any employee in any large industrial establishment, such as the General Electric Company. But it would affect these matters radically, and too rigidly, in

certain sections and in smaller companies. The administration of such a law would be costly — indeed I doubt if it would be possible to administer it fairly and with efficiency.

Every country in Europe has what we know as a Social Security law, but these laws are all on a contributory basis, with contributions by the government, the employer, and the employee.

I believe in unemployment insurance, as I have testified, but I prefer a contributory system in this country, with both the employer and the employee participating, and I believe particularly in the encouragement of industry to stabilize or guarantee employment, as much more important. Both these factors — contributions by employer and employee, and the encouragement of stabilization of employment — are present in the laws of some of our states, but unfortunately neither is present in the laws of the State of New York.

I also believe in old-age pensions. We have a Federal system, which is on a contributory basis, fifty-fifty between employer and employee. I am a member of the Senate's Advisory Council, appointed as a result of Senator Vandenberg's questions, to consider amendments to the law. I think the law can be broadened with advantage, to cover employees of educational and philanthropic institutions not now covered, domestic servants, and to a certain extent agricultural workers; and I think the law can be simplified and modified in other respects also. It has been declared constitutional, and I am not one of those who think that it will be repealed, but it may be amended.

II

When in Europe, of course I was interested in the living standards in the different countries that I visited, as compared with those in the United States. These are difficult, if not impossible, to compare on a monetary

basis, as the currencies of some of the foreign countries are either partially or completely subject to exchange restrictions, so a comparison of this character would result in no valid conclusions. Therefore I made a study of how long an average workman, in certain industries, would have to toil to pay for a year's shelter (rent) — not a uniform standard of shelter, but shelter. The number and size of rooms, and the conveniences offered, vary greatly in different countries, especially when compared with our own; but the important thing is the length of time a workman has to toil to provide shelter for his family for a year, no matter what that shelter may be; and this shows no great variation.

The following tabulation shows the number of months a man must work in the eight countries I visited, and the United States, to pay for his year's rent, and the percentage of his year's income this rent represents.

	<i>Number of months' work required to pay year's rent</i>	<i>Percentage of year's income</i>
Country #1.....	2.1	18%
" #2.....	2.6	22
" #3.....	2.8	23
" #4.....	2.2	18
" #5.....	3.2	27
" #6.....	3.9	33
" #7.....	3.2	27
" #8.....	2.5	21
United States	2.2	18

In the United States, therefore, a man works 2.2 months (representing about 18 per cent of a year's income) to provide for a year's rent; in European countries the time varies from two to four months (representing from 18 per cent to 33 per cent of a year's earnings).

Clothing was too varied, it seemed to me, to make any valid comparisons; but on the principal articles of food, such as milk, eggs, bread, butter, and beef (not that these articles of diet are used to the same extent by the families of workmen in different countries, but in all the countries these staples are used

in varying degrees), a comparison could be made to show the varying cost in hours of work to procure these five important food items.

	<i>Number of hours' work required to purchase a unit of five food items</i>
Country #1.....	4.9
" #2.....	7.2
" #3.....	4.25
" #4.....	6.1
" #5.....	5.0
" #6.....	4.6
" #7.....	6.2
" #8.....	7.3
United States.....	1.7

In the United States, therefore, to purchase a unit of these five items, a man must work 1.7 hours, while in the country that is nearest in this regard a man must work $4\frac{1}{4}$ hours, or two and one-half times as long, and in one country a man must work over 7 hours, or more than four times as long.

But a startling contrast between conditions in other countries and our own is seen in the way people travel to work. In our country, one of the problems in our factory towns is to provide fields for parking the automobiles of thousands of workmen. In Europe they have no such problem, as the workmen use bicycles, which are much more easily stored, or they use the tramways, or walk. As a matter of fact, in no other country but the United States, from the standpoint of earnings, can a workman afford to buy a new car, even of the lowest cost.

	<i>Number of months' work required to purchase an automobile</i>
Country #1.....	18.0
" #2.....	20.2
" #3.....	8.5
" #4.....	12.1
" #5.....	10.5
" #6.....	14.8
" #7.....	24.0
" #8.....	22.5
United States.....	4.5

In the United States, on the average, it requires $4\frac{1}{2}$ months' work to pay for an

automobile, and in the nearest European country a man must work $8\frac{1}{2}$ months for it, and in one country 24 months, or two years. These figures themselves show how impossible it would be for a workman in those countries to buy a car, even on a time-installment plan, as it would be worn out before he could pay for it.

Another article in general use in the United States is the electric refrigerator.

	<i>Number of months' work required to purchase an electric refrigerator</i>
Country #1.....	2.5
" #2.....	2.9
" #3.....	2.4
" #4.....	2.4
" #5.....	2.7
" #6.....	3.0
" #7.....	7.3
" #8.....	6.3
United States.....	1.0

For a radio set, the figures are as follows:—

	<i>Number of months' work required to purchase a radio set</i>
Country #1.....	.9
" #2.....	.5
" #3.....	.5
" #4.....	.8
" #5.....	.4
" #6.....	1.5
" #7.....	.8
" #8.....	.9
United States.....	.2

Interestingly enough, on radio the question of government policy is involved, because certain governments have said that simple low-priced sets must be furnished to all citizens in order that everyone may listen to the words of the officials. Therefore the prices of radios in those particular countries are much lower, in comparison with prices on most other articles.

Finally I take a unit of small cost, one which adds greatly to the comfort and convenience of living — the use of electricity. Electric supply in Europe is sometimes in the hands of private enterprise, sometimes in the hands of the municipality, and sometimes in the

hands of the state. Here, then, is a comparison of the length of time a man must work to purchase one kilowatt-hour of energy—that is, sufficient energy to light twenty fifty-watt incandescent lamps for one hour, or the equivalent.

	<i>Number of minutes' work required to purchase one kilowatt-hour of energy</i>
Country #1.....	24.0
“ #2.....	30.0
“ #3.....	18.0
“ #4.....	18.0
“ #5.....	18.0
“ #6.....	12.0
“ #7.....	30.0
“ #8.....	43.0
United States.....	3.6

In the United States a man must toil 3.6 minutes to provide for one kilowatt-hour of energy; in the nearest European country he must work 12 minutes, or over three times as long, and in one country he must work 43 minutes, or twelve times as long. In this country, generally, the development and distribution of elec-

trical energy have been in private hands, and the problem of making it available to more and more millions of homes has been given constant study, so that now over 22,000,000 homes are electrically connected. The increase in use and the resulting conveniences are apparent on every hand.

The comparative figures on incandescent lamps are of interest:—

	<i>Number of hours' work required to purchase an incandescent lamp</i>
Country #1.....	1.8
“ #2.....	2.5
“ #3.....	1.3
“ #4.....	1.2
“ #5.....	1.4
“ #6.....	2.4
“ #7.....	3.4
“ #8.....	2.0
United States.....	.2

These are sufficient indications, from the standpoint of the workingman, that if we do not endeavor to make progress too rapidly we may have faith in the future.

HOW WARM IS WOOL?

BY MARGARET DANA

A SCOTSMAN stepped one day into a shop in Edinburgh to buy a new plaid. As he fingered the goods the salesman showed him, the following delightful exchange of frugal syllables took place.

Scotsman: 'Oo?'

Salesman: 'Ay, oo.'

Scotsman: 'Aa oo?'

Salesman: 'Ay, aa oo.'

Scotsman: 'Aa ae oo?'

Salesman: 'Ay, aa ae oo.'

And the Scotsman bought his plaid, satisfied that it was wool, *all* wool, and *all one* wool.

Typical of the traditional regard for wool is this story of Scotch caution; indeed, for so long as wool has been known as a textile fibre it has been credited with the possession of unique qualities. Our grandparents believed there was some subtle magic about red wool flannel, for instance, and in that revolutionary period when long winter underwear began to fall into disrepute it was still somehow believed that death by pneumonia lurked in winter wear of anything but wool. Even to-day in the infant-wear department of any store you will hear, repeated again and again like some incantation, 'A bit of wool over a baby's chest and tummy!'

Wool, all wool, is worshiped with a devotion only second in degree to the lack of knowledge as to *why* it is so worshiped. For, in spite of the general belief that a fabric is warm in direct ratio to its wool content, few consumers could

tell why. Even wool manufacturers and retailers are usually at a loss to explain why they too believe it, and seemingly none can prove it.

Against this background of conviction and demand set this strange situation, that for years past there has been a steadily if stealthily increasing substitution for wool in the fabric field. To-day it has reached the point where the very thing the consumer public demands, expects, and usually believes itself to be buying, is among the really scarce commodities. Certain trade experts say they believe that not much more than 20 per cent of the woolen and worsted fabrics being made to-day are all wool, and textile technicians accustomed to testing the annual production from the woolen mills say that in the middle and lower price fabrics there is from 40 to 80 per cent of fibre other than wool. A well-known Boston wool merchant, troubled by this state of affairs, said flatly, 'We know that as much as 50 per cent of rayon is now going into cloth that is later sold in so-called all-wool suits.'

Plainly this opens up an avenue of serious thought. Winter clothing accounts for a large section of the American family budget, and in many parts of the country it is a very important factor in health and well-being for rich, middle class, and poor. Yet, curiously enough in this presumably civilized and scientific age, the problem of warmth in relation to fibre sources and mixtures is one of the least studied and least understood of all consumer subjects.

The surprising fact is that warmth in a fabric is due, not to any inherent warmth quality of a fibre itself, but rather to the lasting thickness and cellular construction of the cloth. Silk, wool, cotton, or rayon may create fabrics equally warm at the start if of identical thickness and structure. For warmth is largely due to the trapped air held in the cells within a fabric weave; the more intricate the meshing of these fibres, the more air cells — consequently the more air held within the cloth and without motion. A second point is interesting, too. Warmth in a room without air currents is a very different problem from warmth outdoors in a gale. In the first situation the prime necessity for warmth is a fabric with the most possible air cells, to provide insulation against outer cold and a barrier against the escape of bodily heat. Closely meshed spongy weaves, which make layer upon layer of fine cellular insulation and which radiate back upon the human body the heat transferred from it to the fibres without conducting it away and out of the garment, are the ideal type of fabric for indoor warmth. In the open air, with a wind blowing, or in active motion such as skiing, skating, and so forth, there must be, in addition, a windbreaker layer. A close, tight weave — perhaps thin, but highly resistant to air passage — is the thing; a suède or leather jacket or a garment of specially woven cotton may be used. A fur coat, as you may see, offers the trapped air insulation through its thick fur side and windbreaking quality through its pelt. Weight and cost must play a part in the wise selection of the proper fabric for each particular need.

There appear to be three general classes of fabrics with a capacity to trap and hold insulating air for warmth in clothing and blankets. They may be compared in turn to a comb of honey, a loaf of fresh bread, and a sponge. There are fabrics which, like the honeycomb, have a cellular construction, with

air trapped and held inside them. But *in use* — that is, when worn, washed, and ironed — these cells tend to break down rapidly, flattening out and ‘spilling’ the trapped air just as a crushed honeycomb spills its honey; and no more than you can rebuild the broken honeycomb can you rebuild the flattened fibre cells. The second type of fabric resembles the loaf of fresh bread; compress it, and afterward it will push back a little into shape, regaining some of its cellular insulation, but never again its original structure. Finally there is the fabric which, like the sponge, may be flattened in use but immediately or shortly regains its size and shape, the expanding air cells again filling with the insulating air.

It requires no master mind to deduct that the last-named type of fabric must be the warmest in actual use, no matter what the others may be in the store or the laboratory. And the next question obviously is what fibres or combinations of fibres create fabrics of this type.

Although wool fibre has in itself no warmth property, it does have to a unique degree the rare and valuable quality of resiliency, which creates a fabric with the greatest capacity to trap and hold air over the longest period of time under use. Add to this the fact of the peculiar structure of the individual wool fibres which makes for felting or meshing, and there you have the reason for our thousands of years of respect for wool as a warmth provider. No other fibre has these inherent qualities to anything like the same degree. Cotton is like the honeycomb, its cells easily broken down and flattened permanently. When cotton is mixed with wool, the effect is partially nullified, but to no great degree. Silk, while having great natural elasticity and resiliency, does not have the same property of felting. Rayon, in its more familiar form, — that is, as a continuous filament from the spinneret, — has virtually no resiliency and certainly no felting character-

istic. Linen cannot be woven into the same constructions as wool to be commercially salable.

But of real importance to consumers is the appearance of a new form of rayon called spun rayon, known to the trade as rayon cut staple. Although known for years as a by-product of rayon, only recently, in this country at least, has it attained major proportions for textile use. In 1935 our consumption of spun rayon was 6,661,000 pounds; in 1936 it was 25,400,000 pounds; and its production and use are still leaping ahead by enormous bounds. Japan is the largest producer of rayon, both in the continuous filament form and in the cut staple form. In 1936 we produced some 12,000,000 pounds of spun rayon ourselves, and imported 14,000,000 pounds, of which half came from Japan; even under the present tariff she has been able to sell her product here at a price with which the domestic rayon producer, much less the wool manufacturer, cannot hope to compete.

Spun rayon is no more than the continuous filament rayon cut into short lengths similar to wool or cotton fibres and spun into yarn, as either wool or cotton is spun. The resulting yarn looks and feels like wool. Fabrics made wholly or partially of it cannot be distinguished from all wool except by experts — and not always then. It creates novel and attractive fabric effects, and, since its production cost is far below that of good wool, it should offer a practical new item in our consumer price structure. But consumers everywhere are asking: Does it behave like wool? Has it the inherent characteristics of wool?

Frankly, wool manufacturers generally do not appear to know. Some are honestly concerned about the situation, but the majority seem to prefer not to know what effect the introduction of spun rayon is having on their woollen goods — perhaps because there is a greater margin of profit in manipulated goods with a concealed rayon content

than in the all-wool or wool-and-cotton goods. The wool growers, of course, are disturbed, but the wool manufacturers, especially in the underwear field, have shown small enthusiasm for the current consumer campaign for fibre identification.

The man who has done the most research on the subject, and can best evaluate the worth of spun rayon as a substitute for wool, is Dr. Frederic Bonnet, chief technician of the American Viscose Company, this country's largest producer of rayon. Dr. Bonnet states frankly that spun rayon in its natural form, untreated, does not have anything like the warmth qualities of wool, at least under consumer use; but he believes that, treated with one of the new resins being evolved to reduce crushing of textile fibres, a fabric of spun rayon may go far toward equaling the qualities of wool.

The resin treatments are now in use for treating rayon velvets in particular, and, as Dr. Bonnet warns, many of the processes are worthless. Some destroy the strength of the fibre, some spoil the texture, some are only temporary. But, with expert technicians and laboratories at its command, the rayon industry may be expected some day to evolve a spun rayon which will have a practical and safe consumer use.

In the meantime, as consumers we are faced with the fact that a vast amount of spun rayon is already in use in the fabrics we buy. Although, in October 1937, the Federal Trade Commission made it mandatory for the rayon content of fabrics to be disclosed to the consumer buyer, the labeling is proceeding slowly and with some reluctance among certain sections of the garment industry. In self-protection the consumer who wants the greatest warmth must demand a guarantee of all-wool content in the fabrics he buys, and where less warmth is required it is necessary to ask for complete identification of all fibres present, since rayon requires particular handling and treatment in use.

TIES OF GOLD

BY H. B. ELLISTON

IN one respect at least we may speak of economic collaboration between the English-speaking peoples as having been secured. This is in reference to money. War-debt adjustment remains a will-o'-the-wisp; the two countries still have to negotiate the shoals of a trade agreement; but there has already been a meeting of minds on money. This was expressed in the tripartite arrangement with France of September 25, 1936. Of course, the understanding is on a twenty-four hour basis, as everything seems to be in this world of flux. But even so limited a rapprochement is better than the state of affairs the arrangement superseded.

Previously there seemed to be a great gulf fixed between the ultimate monetary goals of the two countries. Exchange near-stability had been attained, but only as a temporary convenience, and there had been no dissipation of the fear overhanging the world markets since 1933 of an eventual competitive depreciation race. Such a contest would have been cosmic fiddling with a vengeance.

But the event in 1936 dispelled such a fear. It pledged the coöperation of the three powers in the maintenance of 'equilibrium in the system of international exchange.' Since then the exchange relations between the United States and the United Kingdom have been removed from political controversy. In other words, the dollar and the pound have not only remained fairly stable in their relations; they have been on speaking terms of a much more cordial nature than once seemed possible.

I am not here concerned with the failure of the three-power understanding to keep the franc stable. The arrangement was concluded simultaneously with the devaluation of the franc. Possibly all three parties were at fault in not allowing for sufficient devaluation to meet French needs. French instability, however, has not disturbed the perpetuation of the twenty-four-hour collaboration between Washington and London. And it is on the strengthening of this particular link that any economic Anglo-America depends; an entente which, in the eyes of the Roosevelt administration, is the nucleus of an even wider association — nothing less than a return to a common standard for world moneys. In the administration's opinion, such an achievement is a necessary correlative of Secretary Hull's effort to promote a world standard of commercial integrity.

The new standard, like the old, is gold. But as yet only the United States is a close adherent to it. I mean that the United States has engaged itself by law to buy and sell gold, though not for internal use, at a fixed price. No other government has done that. Thus the United States Treasury is *the* market for the yellow metal. Gold, if you like, is on a dollar standard.

The case of the United Kingdom is somewhat different. There is no fixed relation between gold and the pound, but the British, though under no legal obligation to buy and sell gold, are once removed from such a direct link, the connection being established through

their dollar dealings under the three-power arrangement. Clearly, if the paper pound and the gold dollar are kept fairly stable, the paper pound and gold will remain fairly stable. Thus the Honorable R. H. Brand, the British banker, describes Britain as having 'since 1931 ridden on the back first of France and then of the United States.'

No doubt Americans would like to see the British attach their currency directly to gold. One or two overtures to that end have come from Secretary Morgenthau. But the British prefer to see gold remain on a dollar standard, at least for the time being. Such modesty satisfied Secretary Morgenthau in the fall of 1936. No doubt, however, he wanted Britain to tie up with gold in another way — namely, to share with America the burden of supporting the gold market pending a definitive stabilization of currencies on gold. Such coöperation was regarded as the 'spirit' of the tripartite understanding.

For even at that time the gold problem had become acute in the United States. Since 1934, when gold and the dollar returned to a fixed relation, at a 69 per cent premium, the metal had been coming to America in boatloads. America's supply had swollen to half the world stock — attracted either by the premium or by the safety of American vaults. Most of the pundits, if you can recall the 1936–1937 winter, entertained dark forebodings of a 'gold inflation,' as a result, partly, of what Mussolini once called this 'gold hemorrhage' from Europe.

Paul Einzig in his new book, *Will Gold Depreciate?*, tells a story illustrative of this influx to America. A school-teacher asked his class what was the capital of Europe. 'New York,' replied one of the boys, without hesitation. 'Nonsense,' said the teacher. 'I asked *what* is the capital of Europe, not *where* is the capital of Europe.'

It was hoped that the tripartite agreement would result in the repatriation

at least of French capital. Nothing of the sort happened. In fact, another source of gold supply opened up. This was the private hoards held in London banks till the devaluation circle had been completed with France's defection from the pre-depression gold standard. Most of the new metal came to America because of a rumor that the administration might reduce its buying price for gold. Sellers, trying to get under the wire, feared that America would take this countervailing step to ward off the 'gold inflation.'

Assuredly the administration became restive under what was described as 'carrying the gold baby.' Just before I left for Europe last summer, I went to Washington, and heard open grumbling that Britain was not buying enough gold. There is reason to believe, indeed, that the plain intimation went out to London that if there were not more coöperation from Britain the United States might in fact be compelled to lower its buying price. The alarm in Washington, however, seems peculiar in the light of recently published facts. It turns out that the British, far from refusing to pull their weight, have been industriously engaged in mopping up the dumped gold, along with the United States. In 1936 Britain actually bought more gold than the United States. For the six months ended September 30, 1937, it bought \$500,000,000, as compared with American purchases of about twice that sum. What the right proportion should be is anybody's guess. It is interesting to record, however, that Britain, with a third of America's figure for population, holds a third as much gold as America. Meanwhile the American slump has caused world dishoarders to rehoard, and there has been an outflow of gold from America.

In point of fact, nowadays the maintenance of the American price of gold at \$35 is, on balance, in the British interest. When President Roosevelt offered a premium of 69 per cent on the price of gold, he made, in the words of

the Midland Bank of London, an 'economic paradise' of the Rand, the world's greatest producer. South Africa, probably the weakest link in the chain of the British Commonwealth, relies upon gold. It follows that South African goodwill toward Britain depends upon British goodwill toward gold. Almost as much can be said for India, where unrest has been mollified by the high price of gold, and the ready market for it. Incidentally, the experts who used to talk of India as a 'sponge' or 'sink' for gold have been thoroughly disillusioned by the manner in which even the gold-loving Hindus will disgorge their holdings when the price is attractive.

The difficulty of restoring Britain to a direct gold standard hides a history of disillusionment with America's international monetary policy. To the British the Morgenthau overture had 'an ancient, fish-like smell.' Two experiences are cited: President Roosevelt's murder of the world monetary conference held in London in mid-1933, and the American silver policy.

The former experience has an interesting story attached to it. President Roosevelt, in torpedoing the world conference, was helped to that decision primarily by a director of the Bank of England! The late Sir Basil Blackett was that director's name. Just before the world conference, he had written a book called *Planned Money*, which Colonel House brought to the President's attention during the course of the London parley. The new goal of monetary policy — a domestic commodity dollar — which the President then set for America has its rationale in *Planned Money*, though the goal seems now to have disappeared among the New Deal mists.

In the eyes of the British, however, such high authority does not improve the look of the monkey wrench which broke up international monetary stabilization. Mr. Roosevelt ditched the world plan in 1933 after bringing the British Prime

Minister to America to discuss it. This slight still rankles in England. At the time the British simply turned elsewhere for monetary allies, and banded a new monetary bloc together called Sterlingaria, dominated by the pound.

The silver policy came as an equal affront to the British. Through 1934-1935, turmoil reigned supreme in the silver market. Possibly many citizens of the British Commonwealth made huge profits by selling silver as well as gold to the United States Treasury. For American requirements ran the price up from 45 to 81 cents an ounce in about six months. But to the British these short-run profits were at the expense of the permanent ruin of the silver market. And their fears have come true. Silver was the only commodity that did not join the upward march of commodity prices in the last recovery movement.

Moreover, to add insult to injury, there was the grandiose but unsuccessful plan born in Washington to force British coöperation in the rehabilitation of silver as a monetary metal. This was a scheme to prod England through India. It was felt in Washington that American buying would elicit British coöperation in managing the market out of fear that the price of silver would rise past the melting point of the rupee. For, with the Indian unit worth more as metal than as coin, the British would be faced with Indian currency disorganization.

This price-boosting scheme fizzled out in ineptitude, though American buying of foreign silver is still being pursued on a selective basis. It won nothing from England but criticism, to put it mildly.

Nevertheless, new factors have arisen which constitute new British arguments for coöperating with America at least in accumulating gold. Three may be cited:

1. Britain finds that it has its own 'hot' money problem. This makes its gold holdings a kind of trustee account against the day of foreign withdrawals. That 'hot' money can be protected only by gold holdings.
2. Britain now regards gold as a war chest.

If the American neutrality policy is invoked to the full in the event of a European war, then British gold can be shipped in British bottoms to American shores, and buy necessary American goods.

3. British gold is in part the ultimate reserve for the moneys of Sterlingaria.

In these circumstances the purchases do not appear now, as they did formerly, as a transference of social values for 'unwanted gold.'

In the United States, too, this question has arisen with the derisory comments on the lack of vault space. An expensive hole in the ground has been dug in Kentucky. It is irresistible to poke fun at the world spectacle of Arctic miners under Stalin's direction digging up gold for reburial in mid-America. But, having bought so much, the United States has an even greater stake in propping up its price, and seeing Great Britain prop it up, than British producers — apart from the obvious stake in maintaining some kind of monetary order. For the \$12,000,000,000 in America to-day constitutes by far the world's greatest mine. If the United States were to reduce its buying price, the result, apart from the world chaos that would be caused, would be to depreciate the value of those extensive holdings.

The extent of the loss that would be sustained is easily calculated. Gold holdings amount to \$12,000,000,000. If there were a cut in the buying price of gold of, say, 10 per cent, the immediate loss to the Treasury on this accumulation would be \$1,200,000,000. Offsetting such a loss would be the savings of sterilization costs. Nowadays, when gold enters the United States, it is set apart in an idle hoard, the metal being bought out of the proceeds of short-term borrowing. But interest rates on these Treasury bills bear an average of only 0.4 per cent, so that on this basis the sterilization of, say, \$1,200,000,000 of gold would cost only \$4,800,000 a year. Compared with a \$1,200,000,000 loss,

\$4,800,000 is a trifle, but the contrast is seldom made by those who, like the satirical author of *I'd Rather Be Right*, see the gold movements as merely a transfer from hole to hole.

Still the suggestion of some impediment to the outpouring of gold as a method of warding off inflation harried European monetary minds last summer. It was calculated that production had gone up twice in weight and three times in value since 1929. The last meeting of the Bank of International Settlements voted for a restriction on world gold output. Two directors, I understood, favored an agreement with America to mark down the buying price, one of them the President, L. J. A. Trip, of Amsterdam. The 'scare' that unless something was done there would be a world inflation particularly gripped the economists in Sweden. Nobody thought in terms of deflation. Yet when I landed in America, in the month which many European observers prophesied would be 'the month of inflation, if nothing is done about gold,' I ran into the American deflation! I came back with a profound disrespect for economic experts who talk of current developments *ex cathedra*!

Now, with the American slump upon us, the gold rumors deal with the possible need to increase the price as an anti-recession weapon! Either the world moves at a dizzy pace or gold has become a perpetual headache. May not the trouble arise in part because policy on the part of the two dominant nations is on a twenty-four-hour basis? If the two countries have revived their love for gold, if gold has any significance at all, the time may be nigh when they should have some policy toward gold, at least for translation into action at some future day; and that policy must surely be in the direction of extending the use of gold to like-minded nations. Sufficient for the present, however, to be grateful that the dollar-pound understanding has stood the test of eighteen months' wear.

TOSCANINI

BY ALEXANDER W. WILLIAMS

I

WHETHER we like it or not, it is the orchestral conductor who has become the important central figure of any musical community. In Europe to-day the conductor is clearly of greater stature than either composer or impresario. In Germany, for example, Furtwängler has more power than Hindemith; and if Richard Strauss is still a towering figure it is not only owing to his compositions, but also, in some degree, to his extensive career as a conductor. In England a realist would say that Sir Thomas Beecham was more influential than Vaughan Williams, the distinguished composer laureate. In America we bow even more completely to the conductor. No orchestral or concert manager in any city has the sphere of influence that is the scope of Mr. Koussevitzky, Mr. Stokowski, Mr. Stock, Mr. Rodzinski. In a city of the size and varied activity of New York it might be a question to determine who was the leading musical citizen, though most people would decide for the conductor of the Philharmonic. As for the composer, he need not apply.

Charles Martin Loeffler was for years a celebrated resident on the Boston scene; but it would be a bold man who would say that his influence was wider than that of Dr. Muck, Mr. Monteux, or Mr. Koussevitzky. Eugene Goossens is a well-known composer, but his significance to Cincinnati is as conductor of the local orchestra.

It is by no means a desirable situation

that has grown up in this connection, nor are we the better off because the satellites of the musical world must revolve around the conductor. Conducting, in the sense we know it to-day, did not begin until the nineteenth century. The interest of the crowd for a long time centred on the singer, the virtuoso, the composer, perhaps even the music itself! Mendelssohn was in a way the first star conductor, but his work in this field was a direct outcome of his prominence as a composer. The position of artists like Liszt, Paganini, Jenny Lind, the Schumanns, and others, for some time outshone that of the mere conductor.

Later in the nineteenth century, with the solid establishment of first-class orchestras in Europe and this country, the star conductor climbed into the saddle, where he has remained secure. As time has gone on, more and more orchestras have been founded, so that the supremacy of the conductor is as firm as a very strong current of fashion can make it. Of all practitioners in this field, none has ever held so unusual a position as Arturo Toscanini. This is the first time that a conductor — and not one who is equally distinguished as a composer — has won the prestige of being the world's most famous musician. His career has been no flash in the pan, for he has enjoyed this reputation for some time. And, whereas there are many who complain that a conductor's usefulness is exaggerated, there is no question of the unanimous respect reserved for Toscanini.

His influence is astounding. It is no secret that the Salzburg Festival leans heavily on him as its principal drawing card or that the New York Philharmonic has had hard sledding since his departure in 1936. He can do just about what he wants. He can have as many rehearsals, regardless of expense, as he feels are necessary to maintain his high standards of performance. He can refuse to conduct in Germany or Italy on the grounds that he disapproves of certain political actions. He can abruptly leave one post for another without laying careful plans ahead. In short, he is his own law.

Toscanini is an exceptionally sincere artist and a thorough musician, which is a guarantee that his idealism is no empty pose incapable of being realized. People, especially members of an orchestra, may gossip about some directors and whisper that they are no more than humbugs; but no such slander is ever breathed against Toscanini. He has a marvelous ability to get the best out of musicians, to inspire them to play above themselves. He is passionately intense in rehearsal, though deceptively stolid at the actual concert. He has no superficial tricks of showmanship and is, if anything, an awkward figure on the stand. He has a certain nobility of expression — high forehead, prominent nose, moustache that might once have been fierce, and receding hair; and these features are transfused with a personality that quickly communicates itself to an audience. He probably is not untidy, but he gives the impression, with his dark clothes and a bow tie that is neither straggling nor precise, that his thoughts are above dress. And that, incidentally, is not a bad impression to create.

He conducts without a score, because of his extraordinary memory and his poor eyesight. His gestures are vigorous, sometimes almost whirling, and you would not call them graceful. His attitude is invariably modest in the face of tumults of applause, which he seems to accept as something quite unwarranted

and to wish to share with the orchestra rather than take wholly on his own shoulders. Altogether his is an appealing personality before the public, and in private it is said to be no less so, with perhaps a more immediate feeling of unworldliness.

He was born in 1867 in Parma, which lies in a section of Italy that has a long musical tradition. Verdi was born not far off in the village of Busseto. The elder Toscanini was a tailor, who had fought under Garibaldi. He seems to have been an intelligent man. The son, at any rate, was free to study music and was not hampered by social obstacles which are sometimes advanced by parents against a career in the arts. He entered the conservatory at Parma at the age of nine and graduated in 1885. He was an exceedingly good student and got the highest possible marks in both cello and composition. Some of his songs were published; but he has never tried seriously to be a composer, unless he has done so in secret. He went to Turin to play the cello in the orchestra for the exposition concerts. We have no evidence that at this period he entertained the notion of becoming a conductor, but, with his good record, it was easy enough for him to get a steady orchestral job. This, as a matter of fact, he proceeded to do.

In the spring of 1886 he went to Brazil, still as a cellist, to play in the orchestra of a touring opera company. Rio de Janeiro was the scene of the most dramatic of all the incidents in Toscanini's by no means tranquil career. The conductor of the company was a Brazilian, called Leopoldo di Miguez, who was evidently regarded with the utmost contempt by the musicians under him — most of them Italians. Whatever the truth, it is common enough for musicians to make miserable the life of a conductor whom they don't respect, and the unfortunate Miguez was obviously sorely tried. He stuck out the tour, but on the return to Rio promptly resigned and wrote to the papers in his own defense. *Aida* was to be performed that night,

and at that period was a comparatively unfamiliar work (it was first given in Cairo in 1871 and at the Scala in 1872). The manager was at his wits' end when the audience assembled. They were in no docile mood, and would not let the concertmaster get through the overture (short enough, in all conscience). The distracted impresario appealed to the chorus master, who was booed off his stand before he could lead a note. Finally the members of the orchestra took matters into their own hands. Can it have been that they were entirely innocent regarding the disturbance?

They must have previously been made aware of Toscanini's unusual talents, for they propelled him out of his cellist's desk and on to the conductor's stand. For some reason the crowd, perhaps astounded at the sight of a nineteen-year-old boy in such a position, settled down and let the opera proceed. Eyewitnesses have recorded that one of Toscanini's first quiet gestures was to close the open score before him. The orchestra strove to give their young leader the utmost support, and the performance turned out to be a triumph. From this moment on, Toscanini's career was determined. He continued to conduct the opera in Brazil through a repertoire of eighteen works—an amazing feat when we consider that he had had no notice that he would be required for the post of conductor.

In those days Italy was a place full of opportunity for a conductor. Opera was flourishing, and a young man of not too conventional ideas could ride to fame on the wave of popularity which Wagner's works were rolling up. There used to be a great deal of talk of the hostility to Wagner and the slow grind that his works had to endure before they were received with general favor. But there is more and more evidence to-day that, while his music may have suffered in the discussion of many intellectuals, it did appeal strongly to the public. It is suspected that interpreters benefited as

much as they ventured by the association. At any rate Toscanini, after his return from South America, was instrumental in spreading the Wagnerian gospel.

II

At the outset Toscanini conducted in Turin, though he also visited other Italian cities. During this period of the 1890's we associate him especially with three composers. The first of these was Puccini, whose works were not immediately popular, but who was destined to be the great Italian opera composer of his generation. Toscanini conducted the premières of most of Puccini's works through the posthumous production of *Turandot* in 1926. Chief among the operas that he successfully launched at this period were *Madame Butterfly*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *La Bohème*. Another work that he introduced and that proved an astonishing success was Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*. A less fortunate association, as far as the future success of his works in most of the world is concerned, was with Alfredo Catalani, whose operas, *Edmea*, *Loreley*, and *La Wally*, have been warmly sponsored by Toscanini; it is through no neglect of his that they have not survived.

Toscanini's success in Turin led to his appointment as director of the Scala in Milan in 1898. This famous theatre had had to close down the year previous, but was now reopened under the patronage of the Duke Guido Visconti di Modrone. Toscanini had conducted the orchestral society of Milan and had made such a reputation that at the age of thirty-two he was not thought too young for this important post. This, his first connection with a theatre which was to play a large part in his career, lasted for three seasons. As has been said, he was determined to present much of Wagner, and at the concerts he also offered the symphonies of Brahms and introduced some of the tone poems of Strauss. To all three of those composers he has remained

unswervingly loyal — and above all to Verdi. In 1901 he took an important part in the ceremonies attending Verdi's death.

The circumstances of Toscanini's departure from the Scala are at once so curious and so indicative of the man's character as to bear relating in some detail. He has always made a point of standing out against the prevalent custom of encores during the performance of an opera, and on one occasion earlier in his career he was nearly lynched for his principles by an angry Sicilian crowd. Only the intervention of the chief of the Mafia, who appeared to have admired the young man's pluck, saved him from a really desperate situation.

A somewhat similar crisis arose at the Scala towards the end of the season of 1903, when Toscanini waited, obdurate and motionless, while the audience clamored for an encore to an aria in Verdi's *Masked Ball*. The noise in the hall would not cease, and Toscanini would not give in. Finally he threw down his baton and rushed from the theatre by the service exit. One biographer reports that he had to put his hand through a glass door in order to escape. Escape he did, however, and at six o'clock the next morning was on his way to Genoa and a boat for Buenos Aires.

Such precipitate behavior must have surprised and annoyed the managers at Milan, for they had to make what shift they could to get a substitute for the remaining operas that year and a successor for the next season. As an act in Toscanini's career it was by no means isolated. Similar incidents had occurred before and were to be repeated in the future. Toscanini has never brooked the slightest interference with what he has considered to be right. He thought encores were artistically wrong, and the fact that the Italian nation liked them made not the slightest difference in his attitude. He has always wanted more rehearsals than some managements have been willing to pay for, and, if they are not forth-

coming, he simply downs tools until they are. In most artists such conduct would be considered petulant, but in him it seems to come from a fanatical devotion to his art. What managers say behind his back at one of these scenes is not reported, as a rule, though it is known that his long association with Gatti-Casazza was frequently stormy.

After the flight to Argentina in 1903, Toscanini alternated between conducting the spring season in Buenos Aires and engagements in Rome and Turin and Bologna, and by the season of 1906–1907 he was back in good standing at the Scala. In 1908, Toscanini and Gatti-Casazza signed contracts with the Metropolitan Opera in New York. The latter shared the managership with Andreas Dippel, and the conductors of this brilliant period of the Metropolitan's history were Mahler, Toscanini, and Hertz. What a privilege to listen to the Wagnerian repertoire with the great singers of the time and under such scrupulous direction as that of Mahler and Toscanini!

Toscanini was responsible for two much-talked-of premières — Giordano's *Madame Sans-Gêne* from Sardou's play, and Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*, based on David Belasco's *Girl of the Golden West*. Neither work has made really important operatic history or has appreciably survived. In the former case Toscanini may have worked interpretative wonders with Giordano's score, which intrinsically may not tempt conductors and managers without the glamour of a première. In the latter case it was probably Puccini's fault, since he made no attempt to write music that was even remotely American in spirit. And Mr. Belasco's hard work with the acting to make it appear natural wore off in subsequent performances. Toscanini stayed with the Metropolitan into the first year of the war and contributed greatly to its success during those splendid seasons. Presumably he could have worked with Gatti-Casazza as long as he pleased; but

he had a nervous breakdown and sailed abruptly for Italy. Like all his connections with musical organizations, this one was severed quickly and cleanly.

III

During the war Toscanini did a great deal of charity work conducting for benefits. On August 31, 1916, he conducted a military band under fire on the hilltop of Monte Santo, which was stormed by the Italians during the struggle of Isonzo. In 1920 he gave a concert at the occupation of Fiume for Gabriele d'Annunzio.

Yet, with all this patriotic activity, he did not hesitate to conduct German music, even the *Götterdämmerung* funeral march in Rome over strong protest. Moral or physical cowardice is the last weakness of which one can accuse him.

After the war it was proposed to revive the Scala, and Toscanini was the obvious choice to do it. First he took an orchestra — the nucleus of that which he had been leading in Milan at the time — on a rapid tour of the United States, giving in all 124 concerts. On his return he led a performance of Verdi's *Falstaff* for the opening of the new Scala the day after Christmas, 1921. The season lasted until May and included twelve operas which would do the richest company credit. Among them were *Parsifal*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Boris Godunov*, Boïto's *Mefistofele*, and Catalani's *La Wally*. In the second season novelties by Pizzetti and Respighi were brought out, and there was a notable revival of Mozart's *Magic Flute*. So the Scala continued in a career amazingly courageous, considering the conventionality of most opera companies. Boïto's *Nerone* was completed and produced; the *Ring* was restaged; and Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* was revived. Toscanini did the greatest part of the work.

In 1926, Puccini's unfinished opera, *Turandot*, was given its world première at the Scala. It was typical of Tosca-

nini's independence that at the last moment he postponed the performance a day because he was not satisfied with the number of rehearsals. It mattered nothing to him that musicians from all over the world had gathered in anticipation and made their plans, it may be supposed, for the announced date. Toscanini continued as absolute ruler of the Scala until the summer of 1929. He then planned to retire from the strain of opera direction — he was sixty-two — and devote himself to concerts and special performances of opera. He has held to that policy.

His recent career is familiar to Americans. For four seasons he was the mainstay of the New York Philharmonic until his resignation in 1936, and the triumph of that farewell is still ringing in his ears. In spite of his unworldliness and idealism he made a great deal of money in America. It is said that he received \$2000 a concert, free of income tax, and that he now gets \$4000 a concert from the National Broadcasting Company. Indeed the Philharmonic fee set a record which no other conductor — except perhaps Mr. Stokowski — ever equaled. It also set a dangerous and unwise precedent, the effects of which we are now learning to measure.

Probably Mr. Toscanini could not say with Sherlock Holmes: 'My charges are on a fixed scale. I never vary them, save when I remit them altogether.' At any rate he can hardly be paid throughout the world at the New York rate. It was once his ambition to conduct at Bayreuth, and, as a staunch Wagnerian, he had his reward and went there every summer until political considerations made him a voluntary exile from Germany. He has also had his run-ins with the government of his own country. In May 1931, a zealous Fascist struck him for his refusal to lead the Fascist hymn, 'Giovinezza,' at a concert in Bologna.

For several years he has provided the climax of the symphonic season at Lon-

don and Vienna, and he is the moving spirit at Salzburg, where he erects an artistic barrier against the overfashionable inanity of the public which threatens to spoil that charming town. His recent controversy on morals with Furtwängler is another proof that his word is law in Salzburg. In December 1936 his altruism took him to Palestine, where Bronislaw Hubermann has established a Jewish orchestra. Now he is in America with the National Broadcasting Company's new and expensive orchestra, somewhat to the consternation of the supporters of established orchestras. We may well express some doubt as to how this venture will work out. How will Toscanini's temper and his unquenchable zeal for artistic perfection jibe with the commercialism and hurly-burly of a radio station's management? Will he find that this season's contract is all that he can endure? Whatever the outcome, he will never do anything cheap and could even be trusted in Hollywood.

IV

Every biographer of Toscanini discourses at length on his remarkable memory. He had this quality as a boy in the conservatory at Parma; and there is no doubt that it is just as extraordinary as the memory of Macaulay or Joseph de Maistre. It has stood him in good stead, for without it he could hardly have succeeded to the same extent as a conductor. He is so nearsighted that he could not read the score at his desk in the concert hall. One of the best of the many anecdotes of his memory is that of a double-bass player who broke an E string during the performance of some opera. He brought this to Toscanini's attention during the intermission and complained that he had no other. Then he waited while the conductor seemed deep in thought; he repeated his question and waited again. Finally Toscanini looked up and said: 'It's all right; I have been

going over the rest of your part and you won't need that string again.'

Another characteristic incident occurred in 1892 when Franchetti's *Cristoforo Colombo* was to have its première in Genoa. It was to be an impressive occasion, and then Luigi Mancinelli, who was to direct, fell ill. Mancinelli was the most renowned conductor in Italy, and the opera was quite unknown. The manager telegraphed to Milan to Toscanini, who asked for a day to consider. He got hold of a score, studied it that night, and conducted the première from memory the next day. There is no need to expatiate on this quality. He has it and puts it to the best possible use. Moreover, he has gone on record as opposing the habit of conducting from memory unless there is a good reason to leave the score behind. To all intents and purposes a conductor has to know his score so well that the question of its presence or absence is unimportant.

Toscanini's temper is famous, and there are many stories about its occasional terrifying outbursts. Tobia Nicotra, in his life of the conductor, relates the following incident: 'During a rehearsal of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Turin some time ago Toscanini suddenly perceived that some of the musicians were making no more than a half-hearted response to his very lively demands. "I cannot possibly tolerate indifference in musicians," he exclaimed angrily. "It is your duty, at least, to second my interest." But the negligence continued. One man in particular was inexcusably listless. "I would kill a man for behaving like this!" cried Toscanini, and, leaping down from the rostrum, he flew at the impassive violinist with such impetuosity that his bow snapped and a splinter of wood scraped his forehead.' There was an ugly scene, and Toscanini was summoned before the authorities, but was acquitted.

It must be said that all the stories relate to scenes that were explosive in the interests of the job at hand. They had a

reason and were justified in a higher cause than that of manners. It is known that in real life Toscanini is kindly and that he has many acts of generosity to his credit. He would seem to be like Paderewski in the inflexible uprightness of his character. There is a great deal of charm, but behind it is the solid core of an imperious will.

He is, then, artistically a solitary figure; and his admirers have gone further and placed him on a pinnacle to which no other conductor, they aver, can approach. The recent biography by the Viennese critic, Paul Stefan, shows that point of view to excess. He writes: 'But to appreciate Debussy fully, one must have heard him conducted by Toscanini. Then they [the works] are lifted high above the level of mere impressionism; they are liberated so as to assume that form towards which Debussy was working when death prematurely summoned him.' The inference is that Debussy is somehow inferior as a composer unless his music goes through some mysterious chemical process at Toscanini's hands. No other conductor, it is plainly hinted, can do justice to Debussy; and a listener without having heard Toscanini's interpretations is made to feel foolish if he pretends to admire Debussy. He has been deceived by 'mere impressionism'!

Now this is poisonous nonsense, and is just the kind of thing that works most damage when conducting is under discussion. It is Toscanini's great virtue that he is faithful to the composer's intentions so far as they are to be read in the score. This was said of Mahler, and it should be the highest compliment for any conductor. Many conductors now before the public deserve such praise. Toscanini is to be admired because he so consistently secures a supremely faithful interpretation. But to say that no other leader can let us hear Debussy's or any other composer's works as they should properly sound is to paint a deliberately misleading picture.

Mr. Stefan and other writers are also

particular to point out Toscanini's invincible modesty, his preoccupation with the music, and his indifference to public opinion. From his attitude on the concert platform and the anecdotes of his refusal to give the public encores, this quality may certainly be allowed him. He must have suffered agonies of embarrassment, then, if he read through the fulsome praise in Mr. Stefan's book with its equally abject preface by Stefan Zweig!

Another quotation from this peculiar biography will serve to illustrate the false attitude of worship surrounding the star conductor. Mr. Stefan was taken in Bayreuth to watch Toscanini conduct from the orchestra pit, and recollected this experience in the following terms: 'What words can describe the impression he produced? It was as if he were radiating flames, as if his movements were those of gods scattering lightning.' Less sensitive observers stayed on, but Mr. Stefan was forced to leave the orchestra, so overcome was he by the spectacle. Happily his emotions were not too much for him to forget to quote an appropriate Greek tag. Such assiduous blowing on the bellows to create a hero of a man already sufficiently celebrated is not going to do anyone much good. It is no service to Mr. Toscanini, and it makes altogether too much capital out of the conductor's position. I have chosen Mr. Stefan for quotation of this type, though he is by no means alone in his extravagant worship. It is a perfectly simple task to thumb back the press of this country for any number of quotations which ask one to believe that under no circumstances in future years will such and such a work have such a performance again.

Every great artist, by the boldness of his creations and activity, brings results in his train which are usually unforeseen and often unpleasant. It has been said of Sherman's army and his march through Georgia that the evil part of the damage which so outraged the South

was done by camp followers. There are camp followers in the arts as well. Mr. Aldous Huxley once advanced the theory that Beethoven was responsible for many of the most objectionable qualities of modern music, both the barbarity of jazz and its sickly-sweet harmonies. He meant, of course, that the change in direction given to the art of music by the strength of Beethoven's personality made possible the kind of weaknesses which afflict a good deal of popular and some serious music since his day. It is one of the prices we have to pay for Beethoven's genius.

I am not aiming here at the notion that Toscanini is responsible for the conductor-star system; but it is still possible to maintain that his unique position has caused some of the more hysterical utterances in connection with conducting and has inoculated the public with an unfortunate obsession. The emphasis is entirely too much on the conductor, too little on the orchestra and the music. And this is what Toscanini in all his statements and by his actions has most wished to prevent.

V

We may search in vain for a parallel to the position of Toscanini. No conductor in the past, neither Richter nor Nikisch, Theodore Thomas nor Gericke, has excited such international esteem. Bruno Walter, excellent musician though he is, cannot hold the reputation of the Salzburg Festival in the hollow of his hand as does Toscanini. It must be granted that there is something quite uncommon in the man's personality that fires the imagination of the crowd. Faithfulness of interpretation alone could not do it, for the public is not interested in such academic points. Toscanini's own faith succeeds in carrying mob and musicians with him. He must have had this quality in almost as full power when only nineteen years old, or why would his fellow musicians have hoisted him to the conductor's stand in Rio de

Janeiro and how could he have carried the day with that angry Latin-American audience?

Toscanini's efforts for the contemporary music of an earlier period, for Strauss, Debussy, and Puccini, are sometimes forgotten when the programmes of his recent Philharmonic period are criticized. He began conducting at so early an age, when propaganda and spade work still had to be done for Wagner and Brahms, that it would have been unreasonable to expect him to keep abreast of post-war developments. His Philharmonic programmes were open to the criticism that they were unadventurous. He repeated over and over the symphonies of Beethoven and Brahms, which naturally delighted his audiences. Meanwhile the Philharmonic's other conductors had the harder task of introducing new music, for Toscanini made few and insignificant efforts in that direction; and of course they suffered by comparison in reaping applause. The critics felt obliged to write long notices of Toscanini's triumphs and, faced with the repetition of familiar music, rushed into a competition of superlatives. The press has a heavy snare of the blame in fastening the star conductor in the public consciousness.

It was not a very gratifying prospect that the Philharmonic confronted when Toscanini's half of the season dragged the other half with it and kept the subscribers in line for the whole season. No doubt it was proof of his ultimate wisdom that he finally did retire from a position that was invidious for other conductors and bad for the morale of the men in the orchestra (who, it was said, were less willing to coöperate with other conductors), and that pampered the public (who were less willing to hear what the other conductors had to offer). It would be something to hear this side of the story candidly presented by Messrs. Furtwängler, Mengelberg, and Walter. Now, of course, the press began to eat its words. There was talk of a balanced

season, of the virtues of one conductor in charge of the orchestra's entire season, of comparisons favorable to the policies pursued by the Boston and Chicago Symphony Orchestras. Nevertheless the authorities of the Philharmonic continued to place their confidence in the box-office value of the star system. The very season after Toscanini's retirement seven conductors were produced for the edification of the public, and only recently has there been a real effort made towards retrenchment.

This brief summary of the Philharmonic's recent history is the best possible indictment of the star system, though it does imply that you must have, at any rate, one star. Music, far more than the theatre and the screen, has a very definite and important element of education in its relations with the public. A wise conductor, even if he meets with opposition, cannot in the long run afford to let his audiences have everything their own way, or else their taste runs to seed. The seasonal repetition of the masterpieces of symphonic music can easily reach a saturation point. At any rate it is only logical to suppose so; and it is perfectly evident that a subscription public built up over many years can get lazy in its habits if it is not provided with the new and unfamiliar to sharpen its senses.

The deification of the conductor may be a normal enough instinct, but it can easily work to the detriment of the orchestra and of the music which both orchestra and conductor should serve. Toscanini's integrity has been proof against musical shortcomings and his modesty against the excesses of praise; but not all conductors are so Roman. We have had eloquent and ocular proof of the evils of the star system in Mr. Stokowski's Hollywood adventures.

Even with phonograph records a conductor's reputation and talent cannot live as vividly for posterity as the particular qualities of other musicians. Will Toscanini's genius be recalled as easily as Caruso's? Obviously his fame will survive for a long time by word of mouth and by written accounts. Still, musical criticism is a perishable medium even when writers like Heine and Shaw apply their wits to it. All conductors must live and be famous with their contemporaries, and cannot have the consoling reflection in failure that they will be understood by a later age; so it is hard to grudge them a little hero worship. But the alarm is not necessarily false because it arises out of a normal state of affairs. Though Toscanini's reputation is secure, there is danger in the legacy of that reputation.

WORDS ACROSS THE SEA

BY WILSON FOLLETT

I

THE Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table, who had a way of disguising large impersonal suggestions as personal chitchat or mere fooling, once declared his own extravagant appetite for language in terms that admirably describe the mass of his fellow Americans. The remark is eighty years old, — it occurs, by the way, in an installment of the first serial ever published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, — but it speaks even more eloquently for the America of 1938 than for that of 1858. 'I am,' the Autocrat said, 'omnivervivorous by nature and training.' Being above mere pedantic mystification of the unlettered, he instantly translated his sesquipedalian nonce word: 'Passing by such words as are poisonous, I can swallow most others, and chew such as I cannot swallow.'

The statement is such a one as Holmes could hardly have made without at least a flash of perception that it was genuinely descriptive of his whole country from early colonial times. In a context at no great remove from that quoted he notes that we are 'the Romans of the modern world — the great assimilating people'; and he toyed with the speculation that the Anglo-Saxon cannot survive in the climate of this continent, so unlike that of the mother island, unless he is 'kept up by fresh supplies.' The essential American, he liked to believe, is 'the Englishman reinforced.' This idea in its more generalized shape was, then, a favorite and recurrent one of his, and it is not easy to believe that he failed

to associate with the specific business of language the principle he saw so clearly in other connections.

America is, in any event, omnivervivorous by training and nature and has become steadily more so to this day. The twentieth-century American, in fact, goes the Autocrat one better in that he does not pass by the words that are poisonous; it does not occur to him that there are any such. (Holmes supplied an example of *his* poisonous words in the aphorism, 'The woman who "calc'lates" is lost.' 'Retire' for 'go to bed' also gave him an otalgia.) Like Holmes, we speakers of neo-English will swallow about anything that comes in syllables, and the newer it is the more avidly we swallow it. Our linguistic history on this continent is one long demonstration of the Autocrat's theorem that the Anglo-Saxon finds it impossible to survive here except as his vitality is constantly replenished by fresh supplies.

Three centuries of such replenishment have made us heir to accumulated verbal assets that, so far as range, variety, or sheer quantity goes, dwarf those of any other Occidental tongue and leave those of the British Isles, by comparison, nowhere. Our speech is English reinforced in every imaginable way that means quantitative extension. We have minted, adapted, or borrowed new names for things unknown to the English or known to us first (*prairie, succotash, butte, arroyo, ranch, picayune*). To suit our own sense of fitness or expressiveness we have

renamed a variety of things known to both peoples (*sidewalk, vacation, billboard, squash, hardware*). With a freedom strange and, indeed, obnoxious to the modern English we have naturalized terms from most of the American Indian dialects and languages, from Eskimo, from all the tongues of Europe, from the principal ones of Asia.

By inventive fertility in the manipulation of affixes we have made English itself increase and multiply, often against the resistance of its self-appointed British custodians (*belittle, itemize, electioneer, editorial, donate*). Bored with the very sound of everyday literal terms for common things and experiences, we make each such term proliferate in substitutes at every level from mild pleasantries to pungent slang (*Cape Cod turkey, Pope's nose, logroller, pussyfoot, baloney, joy ride, inkslinger, rubberneck, landslide, sob sister*; and witness *tied, hitched, haltered, tethered, welded, sealed*, and other improvisations for 'married,' *stanza, canto, strophe, frame*, for an inning of baseball, and Hollywood's sublime *horse opera* for a Western film).

In these and a dozen other ways the history of English on this continent is above all a history of rapid, incessant, unbridled growth. American speech, it seems, has perpetuated a stage of youthfully creative zest out of which transatlantic English had begun to emerge even before the eighteenth-century beginnings of serious lexicography.

II

The most cursory review of these differences leads to the conviction that the ordinary American has the run of a great many more words than the ordinary Englishman; that he possesses and uses an actually larger vocabulary. This opinion may not be statistically provable, but it is as certain as any unprovable fact can be. For we fall heir to all the British English there ever was, barring a few score terminological variants (a ma-

jority of which, as *holiday, lumber, biscuit*, we have preserved for somewhat different uses); and to boot we have the whole lavish store of trimmings with which we have ourselves diversified and begauded the king's English.

We manage language as some New England housewives keep house, throwing away nothing we have ever owned, perhaps relegating our old verbal furnishings to the attic as we replace them with new, but sooner or later thriftily bringing out the old to be refurbished with new meanings (*pie, penny, corn, store, battery*). We retain British words in senses long archaic or obsolete in Britain (as the Chaucerian 'guess' for 'suppose'), and we even cling to scraps of English dialect that have either failed to get into standard English or have been lost out of it (*chump, shoat, pesky, char=chore*). For innumerable things we have both the British term and our own (*railroad, railway; fall, autumn; vaudeville, variety; can, tin; letter carrier, postman; shade, blind*). In fact, most of our inventions and borrowings mean, not simple displacement of old terms by new, but retention of the old alongside the new for interchangeable use. Having, then, virtually the whole arsenal of British English at our disposal, whereas the English have accepted thus far only a fraction of American English, we can scarcely fail, class for class, to outdo our cousins in the matter of vocabulary.

The American is, in short, verbally eclectic and omnivorous. His appetite for variants knows no satiety. Of the modern Occidental peoples he certainly makes the nearest approach to that unattainable ideal, the creation of new language for each new occasion, and his repertory of overlapping synonyms for the common ideas and acts is a marvel of the age. For instance, a typical American child thirty months of age, living in a fairly articulate household, has the following expressions for the simple command 'go away,' and can be heard to use

all of them idiomatically when speaking to animals, toy animals, and dolls: *go, go away, go on, go along, off with you, be off with you, away with you, get out, get along, get along with you, light out, clear out, hurry up, scamper, scatter, skitter, scoot, scurry, move, move on, get a move on, mosey along, disappear, vamoose, mooch, flit, flutter, fly, beat it, git.*

Twenty years ago the list would certainly have included the magnificent invention 'skiddoo,' a word done to death, as many an American invention has been, by its inherent expressiveness. The wonder is that 'breeze along' and 'scram' are among the missing. The rest of the same child's vocabulary is, of course, in proportion, and runs a like gamut from restraint to exaggeration, from bookishness to colloquialism, from unexceptionable diction to slang. In a small suggestive way it is representative of American adult speech so far as numerical resources are concerned. Is it anywhere near as representative of British?

The result of such a comparison does not, to be sure, agree very well with a long-standing official belief that the average American somehow gets through life commanding no more than a pitifully, grotesquely limited stock of a few hundreds of words. But, happily, this cherished delusion of the learned about the speech of the unlearned, after decades of being handed on from one rhetorician to another as a sort of trade superstition, is now pretty thoroughly demolished by statistical investigation. It is shown by documented studies that normal children of five — and some noticeably subnormal adults — possess vocabularies to be counted in thousands, not mere hundreds, of words; that Americans not trained or skilled in language have a stock of nouns alone that far exceeds what was once estimated to be the entire vocabulary of a tolerably well educated person; and that an extremely moderate total allowance for the educated citizen is 30,000 words — from seven to ten times as many as a typical pre-war

rhetoric on my desk names as a liberal guess.

It is interesting in the present connection to note that, in this country, the delusion referred to was propagated, not to say parroted, by Anglomaniacs and that it apparently came entirely from English sources. In *The American Language*, Mr. H. L. Mencken's wide-ranging, compendious, and invaluable popular essay in philological patriotism, an American scholar is cited as having traced the superstition to such sources as the English rector who stated that 'some of the laborers in his parish had not three hundred words in their vocabulary.' This rector is an old friend of many Americans. He was habitually cited by the great worthies of the Harvard tradition in rhetoric, from Adams Sherman Hill on; and I am afraid he used to be cited to college sophomores, at second or tenth hand, by many scores of us who knew no more about the matter than that our elders and betters had once told us so-and-so, and to whom, heaven forgive us, it never occurred to open our minds to the richly suggestive actualities of the American speech and writing all around us.

To what extent the clergyman's estimate was a mere impression or snap judgment — and to what extent, supposing it to have been accurate in its day, the darkness has been dispersed by the subsequent spread of popular education — I am in no position to guess. But two points, at least, are clear: (1) he was reporting upon a certain level of English, not American, speech; and (2) the application of his findings to the American populace involved large and erroneous assumptions of analogy by learned men. A little investigation would have shown them that any such account was a libel on the verbal equipment of many American infants of two.

Self-evidently, there has never been a time when any Englishman, savant or yokel, would not materially have increased his stock of words by residence

in America. Englishmen have, in fact, been doing precisely that from the year 1607. Even to this day, and even when they stay at home, they learn a good many more words from us than we from them, though they are commonly reluctant where we are eager. The reason is simply that we have so many more words for them to learn.

III

We have more words; do we also, as many of us passionately maintain and a few of the English generously concede, have better words? The question carries us at a plunge into waters deep, cold, and murky.

Taking it in its most literal meaning, we can find no answer but a plain 'Yes.' The reason is already stated. Being able to disport ourselves in two great streams of English to their one, and possessing the best along with the worst of both, we enjoy the omniverbivorous freedom of all their good words and our own too.

But this is not quite what is generally meant by the question. More often it is restricted by implication to those really very small areas of English in which the two peoples consistently use different words for the same meaning. And here the waters begin to deepen. For sometimes one word surpasses the other in descriptive accuracy, only to be surpassed by it in imaginativeness or vigor (*spanner, monkey wrench; block, traffic jam; whiskey-and-soda, highball*). As a rule it is the British term that excels in literal truth, the American in figurative piquancy. But not always: the English have, for instance, the telling phrase 'cat burglar' for what we tamely call a second-story worker or porch climber. Where there is this difference, who is to say how much of one quality shall balance how much of the other? And where is the scale to weigh such qualities in the first place?

Anyway, the great majority of parallel Briticisms and Americanisms are pretty

close equivalents in both respects (*lift, elevator; tram, trolley car; underground, subway; gramophone, phonograph; tart, pie; goloshes, rubbers; sledge, sled*). And, when all is said, the total of such differences is so small a fraction of the common language, and the interchange of terms is becoming so free, that our question is hardly worth asking at all unless it is intended to cover more ground than this.

What the British defenders of the barricades (together with our own Anglo-maniacs) really mean by their general disdain for our 'slanguage,' as they are pleased to call it, is that *the net effect* of the American contribution to English is debasement and vulgarization. That some of our coinages have great felicity, they do not deny; indeed, how could they, since many are now so long established in Great Britain that their origin is forgotten? But they insist that for every such happy invention we produce half a dozen or a hundred forms that are tasteless, barbaric, or grotesque. In fine, our bad so far outweighs our good that the general average of English diction is lowered by the American share in it. To the language we contribute, they say, a few drops of enlivenment and a vast flood of impurities.

But how much actual merit is there in this entire notion of the English vocabulary as an average that can be lowered by intrusions of the barbaric and kept up by conscientious resistance to such intrusions? Does it really make sense to talk about the net effect on the language of a whole people's contribution to it? Historically, it seems to make very little. All such ways of thinking ignore the decisive fact that time and taste are a great composite sieve through which the useless addenda to language pass to oblivion while the useful ones are retained. One good word remains just as good though a thousand bad ones exist beside it, and it is pointless to speak of words as if they were apples in a barrel. The validity of our language is no aver-

age, but rather the sum of its positive merits. When this continent gives the language a single such invention as 'blizzard' — it has, of course, supplied hundreds quite as admirable — it has thereby improved the resources of English, and the improvement is not undone by whatever else we may do. The linguistic genius of a people has surely as much claim to be measured by its best creations as an author has to be known by his best work or a horse by his fastest mile.

And, anyhow, what words are good if not the ones that make their way and survive? To persons of a certain temperament any word seems bad when it is new, because it is new. But every old word was new once; all have had to run the same gauntlet. Neologisms that, because they answer to some continuing need, are destined to last are, *ipso facto*, good. They may not seem so to us now, but we are bound to come to it. Who in England to-day has any feeling that that once outlandish American importation, 'backwoods,' is less reputable, less English, than the parts of the vocabulary that go back to Wycliffe? It is, indeed, more English than some of Wycliffe's words, for some of them, answering to no felt need of our time, are obsolete and therefore alien.

Historically, it is as senseless to talk about purity of diction as about purity of race.

IV

What actually debases and impoverishes diction is not the coinage of new words that the future may or may not pronounce bad, but rather the perversion of established, admittedly good words — their prostitution to uses that dilute or obliterate their sense. And in this kind of vitiation we certainly have no preëminence over the English themselves, who are always taking one sound word or another and degrading it to mere patter.

Conspicuous fairly recent examples are

what they have done to convert the two adverbs 'definitely' and 'quite' into mere verbal catchalls of a modish sort. That polished sleuth, Lord Peter Death Breadon Wimsey, exemplifies the fate of both in a single line of Miss Dorothy L. Sayers's best-selling murder story, *Busman's Honeymoon*. 'We must all try to think calmly,' the rector begins. "'Quite,'" said Peter. "'Definitely.'" This dry 'quite' is now doing duty for meanings that American speech of various levels might cover by 'Just so,' 'I hear you,' 'You bet,' 'You said it,' 'Says you,' and 'What of it?' The current 'definitely' means 'decidedly,' 'certainly,' 'noticeably,' 'very,' 'more or less,' and, on occasion, something pretty close to 'indefinitely.' Elsewhere in the same book we read: 'I'm definitely sorry for the girl,' 'You're definitely too good to live,' and 'Baths, real baths, are definitely a good idea.' The answer to 'Rather giddy-making, but nice' is 'Oh, definitely'; and the question 'Are you sorry we did n't go to Paris or Mentone after all?' draws the answer 'No, definitely not.'

More thanks to Miss Sayers than to any other one person, this plague is now epidemic in America too. In a New York reporter's account of an interview with Miss Marlene Dietrich I learn that the actress wore no rouge, though she was 'definitely lipsticked.' A young woman volunteer on one of Major Bowes's radio programmes describes herself as being 'definitely from Brooklyn.' Even a recent *Atlantic* article declares that 'there should definitely be some manner of licensing testing laboratories.' A Manhattan store (*Anglice* shop) says that all the débutantes are describing one of its new 'creations' in winter headgear as 'definitely divine.' One of my cisatlantic correspondents finds himself at last provoked to write: 'There is always some popular word one must use, and whether it is used correctly or not is secondary. Just now that word is "definitely." To be up-to-date you must grasp this word

by the fur of the neck, twirl it around, and let fly into the nearest sentence. It would n't do to say simply, "I have decided to raise dahlias next fall." No, indeed! Say "I have *definitely* decided to raise dahlias" (or hell or whatever). In a short time a new word will be "it" to take the place of "definitely." And, he might have added, 'definitely' will have become denatured almost beyond recognition. That, if you like, is linguistic decay.

The British are, of course, by no means alone in their addiction to such catchalls of speech. They are merely prone enough to them to justify the retort courteous whenever the English pot calls the American kettle black. The literate classes of both countries are always sneering at the popular habit of making some one overworked expression do duty for a dozen or twenty meanings (*nice, awfully, the limit, rotten, not so hot, swell, swanky*), but the lugubrious truth is that the literate classes themselves are much given to the same foible. In American reviews of a single week-end I have found the word 'significant' used to convey, so far as I could determine by the context, the following meanings: important, charged with meaning, timely, enduring, popular, eagerly awaited, influential, ingenious, clear, self-betraying, cogent, representative, suggestive, ambiguous, penetrating, apt, suspicious, dubious, sound, disingenuous, risqué. The British abuse the word almost as incorrigibly. *Reaction, colorful, vibrant, glamorous, compelling*, are other such notoriously jaded words of the jaded reviewer. There is, in fact, a comprehensive vocabulary of them, and a great part of Anglo-American periodical criticism is written with the automatism of stale slang, not in English, but in what ought to be called Literish, or perhaps Criticant.

The vocabulary is debased, then, by the careless triteness that abuses existing words of good repute, rather than by the inroads of neologisms, barbarisms, and slang terms. Of these latter groups some

members will be the reputable words of the future. Which ones, there is no way of knowing in advance. For all we can tell, expressions that the fastidious particularly loathe — for instance, 'contact' and 'proposition' as verbs — may presently be so integral with the language that only the philologist can think why they ever seemed loathsome. (That is exactly the history of the verbs 'to negative' and 'to advocate,' which, by the way, were also Americanisms to begin with.) As for the much greater number of similar expressions destined to enjoy their heyday and perish, most of them will not have left a chemical trace in the permanent language.

Nothing on earth is deader than a dead colloquialism that used to be on everybody's lips forty times a day. It is, for instance, only by a feat of memory that I recover the verb 'to smear' in a slang application of my youth, as a synonym of overthrow, rout, dispose of, or confute. A football play stopped dead in its tracks was 'smeared'; and 'smeared' was the undergraduate who, asking a patently idiotic question of George Lyman Kittredge in English 2, drew a glare, an awful silence, and at last, in a voice of hollow despair, the adroitly timed words 'Are there any other questions?' We used to think this invention among the better pieces of slang, and it was used freely by many a collegian of that era whose tongue would never have condescended to 'rubberneck' or 'skiddoo'; but our teachers campaigned implacably against it in the interest of purity, just because it was slang and therefore a debasement. Their campaign had, of course, nothing whatever to do with its demise; we simply wore the expression ragged and turned to respectable old words and newer fashions in slang.

Our teachers need not have bothered. The language can be counted on to obliterate its verbal rubbish as a high mountain peak sweeps away in winter the tin cans and waste paper of the summer visitant. Whether a neologism be

witty ('lounge lizard') or dull ('beautician'), learned ('moron') or illiterate ('go some place else'), British ('wangle') or American ('give him the works') — these issues are neither here nor there. The few expressions that last are completely disinfected by time; their youth is forgiven, their very provenance forgotten; they enrich the language. But the converse is not true. No impoverishment is wrought by the many worthless coinages that soon exhaust their vogue and disappear.

It is a truism that might well be borne in mind by our censors of all things new, not to mention the British censor of all things American.

V

Because our continent has long been more fluently creative of new speech than the British Isles, and because latterly we have exported far more speech to Britain than we have imported from it, the more radical theorists of both countries try to show that we are rapidly developing a complete language of our own — one so divergent in all particulars from English that neither people will long be able to comprehend the speech and writing of the other without translation. The tendency was first remarked to our discredit by sarcastic English observers, but in the last generation or so their impeachment has been accepted as a compliment by various of our own Anglophobes, of whom Mr. H. L. Mencken of Baltimore is now the leading popular spokesman and Dr. Louise Pound of Nebraska perhaps the most eminent academic one. Among them they have made 'the American language' a household phrase, and the reality that it postulates is now supposed to be among our chief national glories.

Is there, sensibly speaking, any such entity as the American language? Or have certain of us drawn premature and exaggerated inferences from the really astonishing omniverbivorousness of our fellow countrymen? Do our linguistic

Anglophobes really make out a case? There are many of us who still doubt that they do; and the doubters include some who have not an Anglophile sentiment in their whole composition.

For one consideration, we are disturbed by the failure of Mr. Mencken *et al.* to make any distinction between the really differentiating influences upon language and simple illiteracy. It is perfectly true that the ignorant error of to-day *may* be the respectable speech of to-morrow; a great deal of language has evolved through just that process. But the chances that any given error will become established are small to vanishing, and certainly too small to mean that we ought to devote ourselves might and main to propagating current error in the belief that thus we shape the language of the future.

Besides, why put American illiteracy on a different footing from British? The two populaces make the same kind of hash of standard usage; why should British offenses mean mere lack of education, whereas ours mean progress toward a new grammar? When Kipling in facetious mood writes

Them that takes cakes
Which the Parsee-man bakes
Makes dreadful mistakes

no observer detects a broad linguistic tendency in the solecisms; no one supposes himself to be reading the English of an emancipated future. But when an American baseball rookie or iceman is heard to say 'on account I got no use for them kind of guys,' we are expected to pounce on the pitiful scrap with glee and gloating and hold it up as a finger-board to the diction and syntax of a new tongue. The argument won't, as our cousins put it, wash. One might as well draw far-reaching conclusions from the syntactical confusion into which children easily slip; as when a two-year-old says, 'Please may I don't want to put on my rubbers?'

As for the lately increased rate of the British borrowings from America, it is a

phenomenon that counts rather against than for the alleged differentiation. It is a cohesive force, not a sundering. Judicious English scholars are now recognizing this fact themselves, and many of them have ceased to rail against the currency of new Americanisms among the British populace.

One prime identifying mark of a genuine language, as distinguished from a dialect or a patois, is that all ordinary persons born to that language possess its basic, nuclear stock entire. Their vocabularies may differ vastly in size and marginal frills, but they differ around an identical core. Now, no American individual has any such relationship to what is rashly called the American language. Mr. Mencken gets his American language by adding together on paper a great many isolated and insulated strata of usage that nothing has ever yet put together in living practice — dialectal peculiarities from all corners of every state; Broadway and collegiate slang; picturesque vagaries of the untutored; specialized trade jargons such as those celebrated in Mr. H. T. Webster's series of cartoons, 'They Don't Speak Our Language'; the characteristic blunders of foreign-language groups just learning English; and forty more. Some of us thoroughly possess two or three of these many strata; others have a smattering of several or even all; but no one (except perhaps the Babu of Baltimore himself) has a comprehensive working grasp of them all, or is ever likely to have. If they constitute an independent language, then a printer's type case is literature.

Thus we are confronted by the anomaly of a language, supposed to be our own, without any nuclear, universally familiar stock of words at all — a language nobody knows; that is to say, no language. The ordinary American *has* a central stock of words, to be sure; but when you inquire into its composition your first discovery is that most of it is included in our Anglo-Norman heritage.

Your second discovery is that the rest of it consists almost entirely of such Americanisms as have already become English on their merits. This central stock of the ordinary American is, in short, English; and he has no other.

VI

Before me is an interesting recent novel, Mr. Kenneth Payson Kempton's *Monday Go to Meeting*, written almost wholly in a regional variation of what Mr. Mencken calls American. ('That would make Ada feel good, sort of make up for her not having a car, and might make her loosen up.' 'If he died on her hands she was sunk for fair.' 'She slept like a good one.' 'She looked young and just off the slim.' 'The man strength was all gone out of his fingers, they were more like a boy does n't know where he's going but bound to get there.') The characters, Maine coastal folk, habitually think as well as speak in this idiom. No one can pick a serious flaw or show a noticeable gap in Mr. Kempton's command of it. But one fact of the greatest linguistic importance is ignored throughout his book, as it is in nearly all regional fiction and in the results of most scholarly investigation of the folk speech. That missing fact is simply the provincial man's tenacious possession of a second, a comparatively bookish idiom in addition to his everyday colloquial one.

From school reader, pulpit, and editorial page, from books, magazines, and lecturers, from the Bible and latterly the radio, the great majority of supposedly untutored provincials have acquired a quasi-literary language that is to all intents standard English. Many of them speak it with a remarkably fluent correctness, and most of them resort to it on occasions of some formality or dignity. To a good many of the folk whom Mr. Mencken likes to call the yokelry it is second nature to slip into this book English in talk with strangers, or on a visit to the city, or when they are called

upon for a public utterance. And — a rock-bottom fact that will be received with incredulity by some urban philologists — it is the common thing for rural folk to *think* in this more polished style. In their imaginary dialogues it is the other person who speaks the patois of the region, while they themselves keep to diction as nearly impeccable as they can make it. Indeed, it is likely to be *too* nearly impeccable to be human; because, for better or worse, the folk ideal of language tends to become a somewhat overrefined, not to say prissy one, inimical to the salty originality of everyday speech and often verging, alas, on the nasty-nice.

At nearly every level of cultivation in the United States the more informal and slapdash ways of speaking are somewhat consciously on the defensive. All sorts of persons will express themselves quite adequately — ‘adequately enough,’ as some of them say — in what Mr. Mencken calls the vulgate, and then unexpectedly translate their meaning into book English by way of extenuation or apology. When the closing game of the 1937 World Series was being broadcast (or shall it be ‘broadcasted?’) and the Giants had men on first and second with none out, the sports reporter in charge assured us that something was about to ‘pop’ — ‘or happen,’ he instantly added. The emendation, be sure, was not made for clearness. It was an assertion of dignified refinement — his own and the National Broadcasting Company’s. A few minutes later, when two of his colleagues were reviewing the completed Series in dialogue, one of them exclaimed: ‘You said a mouthful! — if I may use that expression.’ Mr. Mencken is doing very much the same thing, though of course in a much more subtle and impressive way, when, to glorify the American vulgate in his seven hundred fascinating pages, he writes in the English of Thomas Babington Macaulay.

One very real general difference be-

tween the English and ourselves is the greater flexibility with which we compromise our linguistic habits to any new environmental influence. I know an elderly artisan of British origin who has lived and worked for forty years in rural Vermont: his speech to this day is all but unadulterated Cockney. On the other hand an American man of letters, Harvard professor emeritus, and former editor of the *Atlantic*, Mr. Bliss Perry, assures me that his mere summers in Vermont so far modify his speech toward that of his country neighbors that he can perceive the influence himself. He refers principally to the intonation of words; but the same easy adaptability affects likewise most Americans’ choice of words, and it makes the ignorant borrow from the educated with the greatest facility of all, simply because the ignorant are generally aware that they have everything to learn and are eager to take it from those whom they suppose to know. If Mr. Mencken were to reconcile himself to a month in any New England hamlet, he would add a hundred new expressions to his American *curiosa*, but he would also leave behind him a thousand terms from the standard English section of his immense vocabulary, and some of them would locally displace their colloquial equivalents and continue in common use.

The various strata of popular usage that might constitute an American language if *they were to coalesce* seem gradually to be succumbing to standardization and dying out. What replaces them is simply English. The great mass of Americans from coast to coast aspire to speak and write better than they now do, and by better they mean more correctly according to dictionaries and a tangible, teachable code, as the most esteemed radio announcers and advertisers speak and write, or mean to. That aspiration holds out small encouragement to anyone avid of proofs that an American language comes into being. It would be nearer the mark to say that one has died

a-borning. In all likelihood we have got past the point of maximum divergence between the two great tributary streams of future English. The language is in a period of exceptionally rapid growth and modification, and more of the changes originate on this side of the Atlantic than on the other; but we may reasonably expect to see this evolving tongue become as a whole steadily more, not less, homogeneous. The facility of modern communication makes any other trend all but unthinkable.

VII

Shakespeare used pretty much all the English there was in his day and then manufactured more. His impulsion came from a teeming surplus of thoughts and perceptions over the existing means of expression. To-day his Anglo-American successors find a teeming surplus of language over what any one mind can have to express. The modern writer has not to burst the bonds of language, as the Elizabethans had to do or suffocate. Indeed, he is more likely to burst the toy balloon of his thought by blowing it up with expanding gases of verbiage, simply because the words are there in such unusable excess.

A greater and greater part of our present modern language necessarily stands idle a greater and greater part of the time, and this fact leads us naturally enough to the interesting speculation that our verbal resources may have considerably outgrown our capacity to make profitable use of them; also that America, as possessor of the greatest share of this unmanageable swollen fortune of words, is in a more helpless plight than the other sections of the English-speaking world.

There is, to be sure, another point of view about this plethoric language of ours. A few very advanced thinkers look upon the present medium of expression as hopelessly effete and outworn, and now and then one of them even takes

the ground that the sole intellectual task fully worthy of respect is the creation of a new language for the immediate future. It is a task that has actually been approached or skirted by various psychologists, sociologists, symbolic logicians, physicists, literary surrealists and post-impressionists, a handful of advertising copy writers, and Mr. James Joyce. And anyone who ever writes on fairly solemn subjects probably has traffic with a few correspondents who volunteer to instruct him in some such vein as this: 'Tendencies being new kinds of lengthening over material in order to amplify into personal costing the flow from around you,' or 'Upon which, all theys, in between, all words, all actions, and all men become part of one gigantically simple universing law structure.' But for some reason the hardheaded find the results exiguous compared with the effort demanded of the reader and (probably) expended by the author, and the world remains obdurately skeptical about the pretensions of those who tell us what momentous communications they are ready to make if ever they are given a verbal medium worthy of their inspiration. Most of us continue to suspect that the agitation is occasioned, not by our outgrowing the tongue we already have, but by its outgrowing us, quite as some other human institutions have done.

If there is any merit whatever in these surmises, the superior American facility in word manufacture may not be wholly to our advantage after all, nor is there so much gain as we usually assume in the modern cultivated man's possession of a vocabulary three or even four times the size of Shakespeare's. We may seriously question the service done us by the professional rhetoricians who are always adjuring us to free our minds by adding words to our store, as many and as fast as possible. In the wide and grateful public response to certain modern authors — the Messrs. Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway will serve to

represent them — whose most obvious characteristic is their deliberate simplification of language, their war on verbiage, their almost primitive laconicism, is there not a strong hint that the present world-weariness is in great part sheer word-weariness? A man of letters to whom I have already referred, Mr. Bliss Perry, though he is a polar opposite of these modern writers in about every other way, will similarly remind you, if you urge upon him the benefits of a huge arsenal of words, that one of the most formidable giants of history was slain by a stripling who 'chose him five smooth stones out of the brook.' Mr. Perry means, among other things, that the best words are the old words, the ones worn smoothest by attrition. That is exactly what Joseph Conrad asserted incidentally when, defining the highest levels of truth accessible to the artist in fiction, he described the means whereby 'the light of magic suggestiveness may be brought to play for an evanescent instant over the commonplace surface of words; of the old, old words, worn thin, defaced by ages of careless usage.'

Was there not, after all, a profound rightness underlying the superficial absurdity of Captain Basil Hall's querulous retort to Noah Webster a century ago: 'But there are enough words already'?

Say what we like, there is still something about the finest, most memorable English that sweeps to limbo every contention of British and American, cosmopolitan and provincial, old and new, ornate and simple. If you challenge me

to declare what, specifically, I mean by such uses of English, I rest content for the moment to present this brief sample: —

The sea remembers nothing. It is feline. It licks your feet, — its huge flanks purr very pleasantly for you; but it will crack your bones and eat you, for all that, and wipe the crimsoned foam from its jaws as if nothing had happened. The mountains give their lost children berries and water; the sea mocks their thirst and lets them die. The mountains have a grand, stupid, lovable tranquillity; the sea has a fascinating, treacherous intelligence. The mountains lie about like huge ruminants, their broad backs awful to look upon, but safe to handle. The sea smooths its silver scales until you cannot see their joints, — but their shining is that of a snake's belly, after all. — In deeper suggestiveness I find as great a difference. The mountains dwarf mankind and foreshorten the procession of its long generations. The sea drowns out humanity and time; it has no sympathy with either; for it belongs to eternity, and of that it sings its monotonous song forever and ever.

The case for the American language, or for a new language fit to carry us on adventures that English, mere English, cannot compass, will be a stronger case when its advocates can show a finer passage than this, or one that promises to remain as living in the year 2017 as these words remain in 1937. For, you must know, this is not their first appearance in the *Atlantic Monthly*. They, too, were given to it some time ago by that very earliest of its favorite contributors, that playful and omniverbivorous American, the Autocrat.

MOLE-BANE

BY JAMES STILL

I

OUR house burned in March and we lived that spring in the smokehouse, sleeping in two beds pushed close into the corners, and with strings of peppers and onions hanging from the rafters overhead. We planted our garden early, using the seeds Mother had hoarded, but it was long before the vegetables were ready for eating. Mother cooked under a shed Father built against the house. There was no abundance of food and we ate all that was set before us, with never a crumb left. Father told us the mines were closed in the headwaters of the Kentucky River and there was hunger in the camps. We believed that we fared well, and did not complain.

Father's face was thin as a saw blade, and it seemed he had grown taller, towering over us. His muscles were bunched on his arms, blue-veined and not soft-cushioned now with flesh. He went hunting, searching through the sedge coves and swampy hollows, never wasting a shot. We ate squirrel and rabbit, broiled over hot coals, for there was not a smidgen of grease left in the stone jar. The handful of bullets was hoarded in a leather pouch. Never more than three were taken for the rifle-gun, and Father rarely missed.

With spring upon the hills, it was strange now to go out and kill in the new-budded wood. The squirrels moved sluggishly, carrying their young. Rabbits huddled in the sedge clumps, swollen and stupid. Once Father brought a rusty-eared rabbit home, setting Euly to clean

it. When she came on four little ones in its warm belly, she cried out in fear of what she had done, flung the bloody knife into the dirt, and ran away into the low pasture. She stayed there all day crying in the stubble, and never ate wild meat again.

We had come through to spring, but Mother was the leanest of us all, and the baby cried in the night when there was no milk. Mother ate a little more now than the rest of us, for the baby's sake, eating as though for shame while we were not there to see, fearing that we might not understand, that we might think her taking more than her share.

The garden grew as by a miracle, and the blackberry winter passed with the early April winds, doing no harm. Beans broke their waxen leaves out of hoe-turned furrows, bearing the husk of the seeds with them. Sweet corn unfurled tight young blades from weed mould, timid to night chill, growing slowly and darkly. Crows hung on blue air, surveying the patch, but the garden was too near the house. Our shouts and swift running through the tended ground kept them frightened and filled with wonder.

Before the garden was ready, Mother and Euly gathered a mess of plantain and speckled jack and we had salet-greens cooked with meat rind. The beans were still young and tender, and the potatoes thin-skinned and small. We watched the beans grow, measuring them day by day with joints of our fingers, and dug under the potato stalks carefully

with our hands so as not to bruise the watery roots. We picked off the potato bugs and scraped their egg patches from the leaves. Fletch saved the bugs in a fruit jar, pinching off buds to feed them when we were not looking.

We went out into the garden in the cool of the evening, turning the vines to look for beetles on the underleaves. Father would pull off a bean and break it impatiently between his fingers, looking hungry enough to eat it raw.

'I figger they're fair ready for biling,' he would say. 'It's time we had a mess.'

'They ain't nigh ready,' Mother would say. 'When a bean snaps like you'd broke a stick, hit's time. They ain't had their full growth.'

One morning we found the heaped trail of a mole across the garden, damp with new earth. Father was angry, stamping the ridge of its path with his feet, packing the ground down hard where it went among the bean vines. He whittled two green walnut sprouts, shaved the bark until they were brown with sap, and drove them in the farther ends of the trail.

'That walnut juice ought to git in its eyes and turn it back,' Father said, laughing a little savagely, and rubbing his hands in the dirt.

Euly begged Father to dig the mole out. 'If'n I had me a moleskin, I'd make a powder-rag out o' it,' she said. 'When I get me some face powder, I'd have a mole-rag to rub it on with.'

Father looked darkly at her, and she ran out of the garden, ashamed of her vain-wishing.

II

On the day the men came from Black-jack, Mother was washing clothes, and Father swung the battling stick for her on a chestnut stump. Euly saw the men first as they climbed the hill from Little Carr Creek, and she ran to tell us. 'They's three men a-coming, and they got mine caps setting on their heads, and two of them has got pokes.'

We went around the smokehouse and looked down. They were still a quarter off, and their legs were awkward like a hound's against the steep climb. Mother went back to the tubs. Father waited, shading his eyes from the sun-ball, trying to see who they were. And he knew them long before they turned over the last short curl of the path, and he knew why they had come.

'Hit's Fruit Middleton, and Ab Stevall and Sid Pindlar,' Father said.

The men came into the yard, looking at the gray pile of ashes and the charred ends of rafters where our house had burned.

'We heered about your burning,' Fruit said. 'Hit's a puore pity with times so hard, and all the mines closed up tight as a jug. We'd a come and raised you a house, but we heered you was living in the smokehouse and gitting along peart.'

'We're so packed-up inside we do all our setting out here on the ground,' Father said. 'We got one chair, but it's holding a washtub.'

'Aye, God,' Fruit said. 'We've done so much setting these last eight months it's like pulling eyeteeth climbing that hill.'

'Setting and hearing our bellies growl,' Sid said, dragging the poke he held back and forth across the ground. 'The grace o' God tuk us through the winter. We've come out skin and bone. We would a planted a garden if they'd been any seeds. They was et up, and anyhow there ain't a fitten place to drap seeds in the camp with all the beasts scratching and digging.'

The men glanced out across the garden, now thick with growing, and with the furrow-ridges lost among the leaves. Father slouched down, looking worried.

'We was thinking you could spare us a mess o' beans out o' your patch,' Fruit said. 'Our womenfolks and children are right mealy in the face.'

'Begging comes hard for us who's used to working for our bread,' Ab said.

'The beans ain't half-growed yet,' Father said. 'They ain't nigh filled out.'

'We hain't asking you to give us nothing,' Fruit said, the wrinkles around his eyes drawing tight. 'You'll be paid when the mines open. Aye, God, we ain't asking for handout. Our folks need some green victuals.'

'They ain't nigh ready,' Father said again, and he trod up and down in his tracks without moving from where he stood. Then he looked off down the hill, saying quietly and sadly: 'I got my first hungry folks to turn down. I never yet turned a body down. Go out and see what you can find fitten to eat.'

The men walked out toward the garden. Mother was hanging clothes behind the smokehouse and she saw them jump over the split-paling fence, their pokes flaring up in the wind. Father went around to the washtubs, standing there helpless, not knowing what to say. Mother began to cry silently, saying nothing.

'You can't turn down folks that's starving,' Father said at last, and he knew his words sounded foolish and with no weight. He began to hang a tubful of clothes on the line, spreading them out clumsily until it sagged, and the shirt sleeves were barely clear of the ground. He tightened the line, drawing the raveled cord with all his strength.

The men came out of the garden after a spell. They came with their pokes bulging at one end. We knew they had picked every bean, that not one was left.

'Our womenfolks will be right proud to taste a mess o' green victuals,' Fruit said. 'You'll shorely git your pay when the mines open.'

Sid held his poke up and laughed. 'You got a right fair garden,' he said. 'I seed a brash o' blossoms on them vines. In a leetle time you'll have all you kin eat.'

They had turned to go when Ab suddenly pulled something out of his pocket and threw it upon the grass. It was a dead mole.

'I dug this varmint out o' the garden patch,' he said. 'I seed where he'd holed-up under a pile o' dirt and I scratched him out. They ain't nothing that can tear up a garden like a mole varmint. You ought to plant a leetle dog-tick around. Hit's the best mole-bane I ever heerd tell of.'

Ab hurried down the hill to catch the others, the rocks rattling under his feet. Euly grabbed up the mole and was gone with it before Father could stop her, running swiftly around the house. And Mother ran too, swinging her arms in dismay, for she had heard the clothesline break, and the clean garments now lay miserably in the dirt.

HE WHOSE LAUGH LASTS

BY WALTER BROOKS

THERE was a man named Roper Browne and he had reached the middle thirties without ever having made a fool of himself. His parents, happily for them, were dead and he lived alone with one servant in an apartment in the East Sixties, where he wrote the satirical comedies which had brought him a small amount of money and a large *succès d'estime*. He was much sought after, for his wit was quick and corrosive, and although he had not laughed from the diaphragm since he was six, it was amazing the number of things he found to laugh at. He prided himself on his tolerance, although he was exquisitely intolerant of everything usual and normal. Like those lesser wits who build unconventionality into the rigidest of conventions, he had made an inflexibly dogmatic religion of heterodoxy. He would have been quite a good fellow if someone had beaten hell out of him about once a week.

Well, Mr. Browne had an aunt named Miss Agnes Slocum, who wore girlish hats and was thirty pounds overweight, owing to an inability to keep her mouth shut when a caramel was approaching it. Miss Slocum was kind, simple, romantic, talkative, and worth two million dollars. So Mr. Browne always accepted her invitations, which were usually for a long week-end at her country place and usually included a painfully healthy girl, smelling faintly of soap, in whom she hoped to interest him. For two million dollars is two million dollars even after the inheritance tax is taken out, and

Mr. Browne had ways of discouraging healthy girls.

So one time when he went down Miss Slocum did not give him his usual room because of a dead mouse under the floor. 'Come up,' she said, 'and I will show you where I am going to put you.' And she led him upstairs and threw open a door and said, 'I always call this room The Bower because of the wallpaper — are n't the rosebuds sweet? And I know you will like it, Roper.' And she went to the window and said, 'There is such a lovely view of the garden. And at dusk,' she said, lowering her voice and raising a forefinger, 'if you watch v-e-r-y carefully you may see the little elves at play. And when you come downstairs,' she added roguishly, 'I have someone I want you to meet.'

'Oh God,' sighed Mr. Browne when she had gone, and he smiled commiseratingly at himself in the glass and then he walked over and fingered the books on the table beside the bed. Miss Slocum always selected these books for her guests herself and of course she knew he would not like anything heavy. There were several volumes of Barrie and Milne and a new Wodehouse and the current *Saturday Evening Post* and *New Yorker* and, for more serious reading, *Gone with the Wind*. So Mr. Browne picked up the *New Yorker* and sat down by the window. And after a minute he smiled. It was not a prominent smile, being composed mainly of a slight quiver in the right cheek, but there were a lot of people in New York who would have been over-

joyed to have said something to cause it. And after another minute he smiled again, and as that was certainly as much as he could expect of the *New Yorker* he laid it down and looked out of the window.

So he looked down across the garden and tried to imagine Barrie and Milne and Aunt Agnes reduced in size and frolicking with the fairies, and he thought it would be amusing to do a short piece on the subject which would be a riot of the most abysmal whimsy, only, of course, prudently leaving out Aunt Agnes. And he had begun to plan it when there was a flicker in the garden and he looked more closely, and there, climbing up a foxglove stalk, was a fairy.

Well, Mr. Browne was armored against the blows of fate with his invincible irony, but he was n't armored against this. He rubbed his eyes and looked again, and then he closed them and dropped back in his chair, feeling a little sick at the stomach. 'I have a visual imagination,' he said to himself, 'but my God, it has never been as visual as this, and I had better see my oculist at once.' And after a moment he felt better, and without looking out again he went downstairs.

Well, there were a number of people on the terrace flourishing cocktails, and when he had flourished a couple too and had met everybody and found them all quite normally tiresome he was able to forget the fairy. The healthy girl was there too, and he knew her because of the archness with which Miss Slocum introduced and then left them. She was a sunburned redhead rather on the husky side, though remarkably pretty. She said, 'Do you play golf?' And he said, 'Good God, no!' And after a few interchanges like that he got rid of her all right.

Well, the redhead, whose name was Margery Ware, sat next him at dinner, but she did not say much, and as he was still too shaken by his terrible experience to be actively unpleasant she did not

seem definitely inimical when they rose from table.

While the others were having coffee Mr. Browne drifted into the house and started up to his room. But halfway up the stairs he stopped and stood for a minute thinking, and then he gritted his teeth and turned and went straight out into the garden. First he walked up to the stalk of foxglove and examined it carefully. It seemed normal. He shrugged and went on past beds and borders and hedges till he came to the maze, which was a good maze, and the only thing in the garden that appealed to him. Inside the paths were dim now, but he went through to the middle and sat down on the stone bench. 'My God, I do enjoy my own company,' he said. And then something laughed.

Mr. Browne sat up straight. 'Hello,' he said. 'Who's there?' There was no answer for a second, and then the creature he had seen among the foxgloves bounded over the eight-foot hedge and stood on the grass in front of him. 'Hello, Roper,' said the fairy. 'Well, that remark of yours certainly gave us a laugh. Do you think you'd like your own company if you knew what it was really like?' 'You — you're not real!' stammered Mr. Browne. 'Neither are you,' said the fairy. 'Real? Not as real as a stomach-ache, hey?' He pointed his finger and Mr. Browne doubled up with an excruciating cramp. Then the fairy snapped his fingers and the cramp was gone. 'Just a demonstration,' he said.

But Mr. Browne did not listen to any more. He was on his way out. He knew the maze well enough. But after taking the proper turns he came out, not in the garden, but in the centre plot again. He tried three times and then gave up and sank down breathless on the bench. And the fairy laughed and there was a chattering and giggling behind the hedge.

Presently, with an immense effort, Mr. Browne pulled himself together. 'Forgive me,' he said. 'Miss Slocum told me I might expect to see you here,

but frankly, you know, I don't believe in you.' 'You're a fool,' said the fairy. 'Miss Slocum is simple. But it's not the same thing.' 'She thinks you're awfully cute,' said Mr. Browne. 'Well, she thinks you're cute too,' said the fairy. 'My God, I'm afraid you're right,' said Mr. Browne. 'I've heard her say so.' 'Why are you ashamed of your aunt?' asked the fairy. 'Good heavens, I'm not ashamed of her,' said Mr. Browne. 'I'm not ashamed of anything.' 'You're ashamed of everything,' said the fairy, 'including yourself — that simple inferior little self that's just like everybody else in the world. So you cover it up with a laugh. But it's not a very good laugh. And that's why we're here. We're going to give you a good laugh for once, Roper. Come on, boys.'

And with that they came pouring over the hedge. He never knew how many there were, for they fell upon him with yells of cold fairy laughter and tickled him. They tickled Mr. Roper Browne until he rolled screeching and panting and howling with hysterical laughter. He rolled and struggled and drooled and tore at the grass as those sharp devilish fingers searched out the hidden nerves and twanged upon them mercilessly. And then suddenly they were gone. And he sat up wiping the sweat from his forehead, with his diaphragm still quivering and heaving like a speared salmon, to see Miss Ware standing beside him.

'Golly!' said Miss Ware, peering at him through the dusk, and then she held out her hand and pulled him to his feet. For perhaps the first time since he had learned to talk Mr. Browne was unable to think of anything to say. He knew only that he had made almost an obscene exhibition of himself before this commonplace girl. And yet he was glad somehow that she was there. 'I heard you laughing,' she said. 'Miss Slocum sent me to find you. We're going to play charades. I did n't know you could laugh.' Mr. Browne did n't say anything.

She led him out of the maze and back to the house. She talked as they went along and he realized that she was doing it to cover his embarrassment. He tried to resent it, for he abhorred kindness, but he found he was grateful. When they reached the house Miss Ware and another girl chose up sides and to his surprise he was her first choice. They did *staccato*, and for the first syllable Miss Ware was to be burned at the stake as a witch. 'You'll do that well,' she said to Mr. Browne. 'I think you're the kind that burned witches.' 'A Puritan?' said Mr. Browne. 'Not a Puritan,' said Miss Ware. 'No. You'd only burn the normal people, would n't you? A bigot.' 'You don't like me very well, do you?' said Mr. Browne indifferently. 'Not very well,' said Miss Ware. 'Should I?' And Mr. Browne said, 'Heavens, no! We're too utterly different.' 'Yes,' said Miss Ware, 'you have the bigot's narrowness with only two alternating emotions — contempt and self-satisfaction. That laugh I heard could n't have been you.'

She was n't being kind any more, and Mr. Browne began to like her better, though the change displeased him, somehow, too. They went on with the charades. It was a form of entertainment which Mr. Browne had always thought incredibly puerile, but unfortunately he was unable to register this impression because his diaphragm was still under incomplete control and he kept bursting into hearty laughter, which puzzled Miss Ware, pleased Miss Slocum, and seemed perfectly natural to the others — all of which irritated Mr. Browne.

Well, the hell of it was that the next day the hearty laugh continued. Mr. Browne's overstimulated diaphragm had got completely out of control. A mere giggle from someone else was enough to set it heaving, and then his mouth would open and out would come a dreadful full-bellied 'Haw-haw!' It was exactly as if he were being tickled, and indeed per-

haps he was, though none of those horrible little creatures — he could not even to himself speak of them as elves or fairies — was visible. What was worse was that he began to rationalize these laughs and almost persuaded himself several times that the occasion for them was really funny.

As a result everybody began to like him. He had never experienced liking before. It made everything a little strange, as if he were bewitched. People asked him to play games or take walks and a Mrs. Barlow told him all about her winter in Honolulu and Miss Slocum said, 'Why, Roper, it's so nice seeing you enjoy yourself! You're quite blossoming out.' Even Miss Ware said, 'I'm sorry I was nasty to you last night. But you were quite nasty to me, you know.' 'Well,' said Mr. Browne, 'were n't we predestined to quarrel, since Aunt Agnes so obviously hopes we'll like each other?' 'I don't see why that should influence you one way or the other,' said Miss Ware. 'Ah,' said Mr. Browne, 'you have n't been the object of Aunt Agnes's matrimonial plots for ten years.' 'Oh, you were afraid of me,' said Miss Ware. 'Well, still your fears and come on down to the tennis court with the others. Are you going to hang around the house all day?'

Well, Mr. Browne had indeed been going to stay indoors, for the thought of the garden, where God knew what lurked beneath the leaves, was terrifying. But he went. 'She's so damned sane,' he said to himself, 'those cursed visions can't come when she's around.'

They sat down on the grass and watched the play. Mr. Browne smelt the usual faint smell of soap, but it was rather nice soap. They talked and she told him a lot of things about herself which are of no interest to us, and Mr. Browne's diaphragm heaved at appropriate moments and the laugh came out. And then once he laughed all by himself. And then he sat up sharply very straight, and said, 'Oh!'

'What is it?' said Miss Ware. 'Are you — is anything —' 'I laughed,' said Mr. Browne rather stupidly. 'Evidently it surprises you as much as it does me,' said Miss Ware. Mr. Browne looked rather fixedly a moment and then said, 'Come over into the maze with me, will you?' So she got up, looking puzzled, and they went into the maze and sat down on the stone bench. And Mr. Browne said, 'Tell me what you saw in here last night.'

So Miss Ware smiled and said, 'Well, I saw you rolling around and laughing and being silly all by yourself and I changed my idea about you. Because I like people who don't mind being silly — even as silly as you certainly acted.' 'I don't think I understand that,' said Mr. Browne, looking perplexed. 'I was making a fool of myself.' 'Well, that's permissible,' said Miss Ware. 'What is not permissible is to try to make a fool of other people.' 'Listen,' said Mr. Browne. 'Something rather frightful happened to me here last night. I can tell you — I've got to tell you about it because — oh, because you saw me stripped bare of all my pretensions and defenses.' 'I was n't making fun of you!' she broke in angrily. 'No,' he said. 'Listen.' And he told her what had happened.

When he finished he got up and turned partly away from her. 'God help me,' he said, 'it's pure whimsy, even to the gossamer wings and the little red caps. And yet I know it's true!' He turned. 'Is it whimsical?' he asked. 'Miss Slocum would love it,' she said, smiling. 'I was afraid so,' he said bitterly. 'You see, I can't really tell, because it *was* real.' 'Yes,' she said. 'But feeling about me — about people — as you do, why did you tell me?' 'Because your seeing me like that did something to me,' he said. 'You know, somehow, all there is to know. The worst. So that with you I feel — safe. Secure. Whether I like it or not — whether you like it or not.' He burst into loud frank laughter. 'To

have fairies happen to *me*!' he shouted. 'Yes,' said Miss Ware, 'it could n't have been funnier. And yet,' she said, 'I'm glad it happened.' 'Why do you say that?' he said. 'For your sake,' said Miss Ware. He looked at her steadily and said, 'And not at all — for yours?' 'Why not?' she said and put her hand on his and looked into his eyes. Then she got up. 'Now,' she said, 'you have seen *me* — as I am.'

Well, it may seem strange to you that Mr. Browne, who always had the last word to put the final flourish to a conversation, had nothing to say to that. He took her hand and together they walked out of the maze and down past

the tennis players without seeing them, and they did n't get back until long after dinnertime.

I wish I could tell you that they were married and lived happily ever after and that Mr. Browne's laugh got into his next comedy and made it literally a howling success. But as a matter of fact, although they were married and did indeed live very happily, Mr. Browne never wrote any more comedies, for Miss Slocum died the next year and he and Mrs. Browne moved to California. And his laugh grew on him and began to be susceptible to even the most trivial stimuli, such as radio gags. They say he has now taken to making puns.

FRÈRE JACQUES

BY JOHN CHEEVER

FIVE minutes before she drove into the yard behind the camp, he could hear the car coming down the dirt road. Its sound was hard to distinguish from the sound of the wind that had come up that day at dark, brushing through the tops of the pines. Then the headlights swept the room like the drunken light of a hurricane lamp, and he heard the motor idle and stall. She whistled to him. Then she called to him through the screen door:—

'Open the door, please, Alex. I'm loaded down with bundles and Héloïse is cutting up.'

Her voice sounded tired. He opened the door and she came into the room. In the crook of one arm she was carrying a large bundle of fresh laundry, holding it against her breast as if it were a child. In the other arm she had a lot of small packages.

'Back so soon?' he said. He was Russian and he spoke with a slight accent. 'It did n't take you long. Did you get everything?'

'Kiss me,' she said.

He kissed her.

'Did you get everything?' he asked again.

'Yes,' she said. 'The *Times*, nails, the padlock, the laundry. The post office was closed, but I dropped our forwarding address in the mailbox. Oh, Alex, this business of moving gets me down. Look at my hands.' She held up her left hand to show him. It was trembling.

'Yes,' he said, 'I know. It makes me tired, too.'

'It's not that I've done anything,' she said. 'It's just the business of making the break. And this bloody weather. The way that wind blows up.'

'Yes, I know,' he said.

She handed him the *Times* and laid down all of the parcels but the laundry bundle. She still held that affectionately in the crook of her arm. She was tired and he noticed it. Her face was pale and slightly drawn, and her voice was tired. Her yellow hair was trussed up simply at the crown of her head, and it made her look younger than her twenty-two years and accentuated the tiredness and restlessness of her features. He lit a lamp and sat down to read the paper. He was interested in the Spanish trouble and he was anxious to find who was holding Madrid.

'Mrs. Wiley said she was sorry to see us go,' she said. 'She has n't swindled anyone on a laundry bill the way she swindled us for years. And I said good-bye to the butcher and the garage man for you. It's surprising how many people you can get to know in two weeks. And I bought an ice cream for Héloïse.'

'You're telling me,' he said, without looking up from the paper. 'It's all over her face. Chocolate?'

'Yes,' she said, 'chocolate. If you have a handkerchief I'll wipe it off.'

He reached into his pocket and took out a large, clean handkerchief. He always had clean handkerchiefs. She took the handkerchief and daubed at the face of the laundry bundle with it as if she were wiping the ice cream from a child's mouth. The joke of the laundry bundle was an old one. Every bundle of salt, sugar, corn meal, flour, or laundry that she had carried, during the two years they had lived together, she had called Héloïse, and they had talked lightly and facetiously over it as if it were their child. She was very young and this strained talk was some of the tenderest that had gone between them. But he was ten years older than she and he often tired of it. He was tired of it on that evening, and it was a strain for him to keep it up.

'Any better?' she asked, holding up the bundle for him to see.

'Much better,' he said. 'Did honey like the ice cream?'

'Tell Daddy how good the ice cream was,' she said, jogging the bundle tenderly on her arm.

'Has the little girl lost her tongue?' he said. He was bored and irritated by it, but he kept it up for her sake.

'Oh, well,' she said, 'she's as tired as we, and we can't expect her to talk all the time. I do wish we could bring her up in the country, Alex. She'd be a brighter baby.'

'Money,' he said.

'Yes, darling,' she said, 'I know. Back to Bank Street for you, Héloïse.'

He went back to his paper and she stood at the open door, looking out on to the lake. The oppressive clouds were filling in with dark, like sailcloth, and the lake was beginning to chop under a northeast wind. The clouds and the wind and the dark were all bearing up from the narrows, and in the gray light the lake seemed to have something as hostile and defenseless about it as the seaboard.

'There's nothing more to do?' she asked.

'No,' he said. Her persistence in talking while he tried to read irritated him. 'We can leave the keys here. We ought to get to bed soon. I want to start early in the morning. I'd like to get back to the city before dark.'

'That outboard sounds like a hornet,' she said.

The single sound above the chopping of the waves was the droning of an outboard, way up beyond Basin Bay.

'What did you say about hornets?'

'That outboard,' she said; 'it sounds like a hornet.'

'Oh,' he said.

'Want to go swimming?' she said. She stood with her back to him, looking out over the lake. She was still holding the laundry bundle.

'It's too cold,' he said.

'No, Alex, it's not too cold. And it's our last chance to go swimming until

next summer. And when you come out the air seems warmer.'

'You know what the doctor said.'

'To hell with the doctor.'

'Well, go swimming if you want. You'll have to go alone.'

'I don't want to go swimming alone,' she said quietly.

'Why don't you sit down and enjoy yourself?' he said. 'It's your last chance.'

'I am enjoying myself,' she said. 'Héloïse and I are having the time of our lives, are n't we, Héloïse? Just a couple of bugs in a rug. See the gull?'

'Where?' he said, putting down his paper again.

'Right over there.'

'Oh, yes.'

A gray gull, a shade lighter than the overcast sky, rode above the water, hunting.

'I did n't know gulls liked fresh water,' she said.

'They come down the Saint Lawrence,' he said, 'and then down Champlain.'

'I'll bet they get homesick for the ocean,' she said.

For a long time neither of them spoke. He thought she had left the room, but when he looked up she was still standing there. The room had grown dark, but her white *espadrilles* and her dress seemed to hold the light. He could still see them distinctly.

'Can we have a fire, Alex?' she said.

'It's not cold enough.'

'Oh, I don't want it for that. It's just that it would be a nice evening to have a fire. This is the kind of weather to have fires. It makes me feel lonely — the noise of that wind.'

'Anyhow, there is n't any wood,' he said. 'We burned it all last night.'

'Well, let's do something,' she said. 'Let's play double Canfield.'

'I'm too tired,' he said.

'You get tired easier than I.'

'I'm older than you.'

'Love me, Alex?'

'Sure, but I'm tired.'

'I don't know why I'm so restless,' she said. 'I hate moving and I hate autumn. When I was nine years old, Grandfather took me up to Boston to buy some school clothes and we stayed at an old hotel and it smelled just like this camp. I had to get out of bed to go to the bathroom and I was terrified. I can still remember it.'

He wished she would stop talking.

'Well, Héloïse,' she said, patting the bundle, 'maybe some day we'll have money and we can have a house in the country. We'll live in the same place year in and year out and do all of those things that Mother remembers. Oh, living on Bank Street, honey, would n't give you the faintest idea of what a life can be — a life without Mrs. Weiner and Mrs. White and Mrs. Deutsch and Daddy's drinking companions ringing the doorbell all the time. Sometimes you think you've just dreamed it or imagined it, sweet, but it actually exists. The trucks don't take your sleep away. It's quiet at night. Daddy can hunt and Mummy can have a horse. "Bye-low, baby bunting," she sang, cradling the bundle, "Daddy's gone a-hunting, to get himself a rabbit skin, to wrap his baby bunting in."'

She hesitated and bent over the bundle. She was very good at mimicry, and the angle of her arms and shoulders and the tone of her voice were absorbed and affectionate.

'Is n't that sweet?' she whispered. 'She's fallen asleep. The poor little tyke is tired. She's such a good egg, Alex. Here we've dragged her off to the country and now we're dragging her back to the city, and not one word of complaint. Some babies would squall; but not Héloïse. She looks a lot like you when she's asleep. Something about the eyes. Don't you think?'

'Yes,' he said. He tried to show in the tone of one word how tired he was of her talk.

'We'll have to have her photographed,'

she went on. She spoke in a low voice, as if she were afraid she would wake the bundle. 'We must keep a record of her golden months. I'll get in Honnegen-Hunné. Both of our mothers were Boston women.'

'Please,' he said, 'I'm trying to read.'

'All right,' she said.

He was sorry to have spoken shortly and he looked over to where she was standing. He thought he heard her cough.

'That wind is cold, darling,' he said. 'You'd better put a sweater on.'

She did n't answer him. Then he saw that she was not coughing, but that she was crying. She was sobbing like a runner who is tired and short of breath.

'Now what's the matter?' he asked.

'Nothing much,' she said quietly. 'I want a child.'

'But why bring that up now? You know we can't afford one.'

'Yes, I know. But I want one, I want one, I want one!' she cried hotly, turning to him. Her face was shining with tears. 'I'm sick of this, Alex; I'm sick to my heart of this.'

'But why do you get yourself excited about it? You know there's nothing we can do now.'

'Or ever.'

'But why do you get yourself excited by it?'

'There are some things we could do.'

'What?'

'You might marry me.'

'What difference would that make?'

'A great difference for me,' she said.

'A human difference.'

'Don't get sentimental.'

'Mother is sentimental, Héloïse,' she said. 'Comfort your sentimental mother. Reassure her. She feels as if she were falling.'

'Please,' he said tiredly, 'don't begin that.'

He put his hand on her shoulder, but she twisted quickly out of his reach.

'Father does n't understand us at all,' she said. She had stopped sobbing then and she was speaking to the bundle with great confidence.

'Father does n't understand us at all,' she repeated, 'not at all. *Mais ça ne fait rien, chérie. Pas du tout, pas du tout. "Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques,"*' she crooned.

'Stop it,' he pleaded, 'please.'

'"*Dormez-vous? Dormez-vous? Sonnez les matines, sonnez les matines.*"'

He was frightened, then, for if they had been frankly separating in a cold depot, on a rainy pier, in the doorway of a restaurant, if she had been screaming and crying and drumming her heels on the floor, her words could n't have held more finality and estrangement than the simple, persistent words of that song.

HELL NEEDS A CHAPLAIN

BY GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD

PADRE FRANCISCO was listening. The arc of the mountains encircled him on all sides but one, where shone the deserted sea. There was a fast, clear stream at his feet, and on the farther bank a meadow, very green and studded with white boulders and jeweled with low flowers in the short grass. It was spring, and there were children in the meadow; one of them held a lamb by the forefeet and played that he was teaching it to dance. Men said there was war in Spain, but Spain was beyond Galicia and Galicia beyond the mountains. No railway crossed the mountains, nor any way but one, and that unkindly to horse and man. Caladonga had its cove by the sea, but only the fishermen of the village ever landed there, for it offered no open entry to the passing craft.

Padre Francisco was listening to music: the music of a pipe which trilled and warbled from a bank of yellow iris by the stream. The child did not hear it, though his feet moved in time to the measure. The lamb heard, and its head was turned towards the stream. Padre Francisco heard. His cloth did not protect him from the pipe of Pan, for he was innocent and beloved. He raised his hand and blessed the pipe and its player. All creatures in Caladonga, seen or unseen, were his flock.

There was no shame, either of men or of the Others, among his flock, for he did not accuse. He knew the spring upon the hillside visited at the new moon by the unmarried girls. He left untouched the grains of wheat scattered upon the

high stone which stood in a ring of uncut grass. He was silent when the returning fishermen poured wine into the sea opposite a silver-sanded cave. Padre Francisco had blessed these sanctuaries. He said: —

‘If there is need of your charity, give, my children. But give in the name of the Most High and pray for him that receives.’

For sixty years he had tended his parish — a white, red-roofed village and its little plain, forgotten of all save the carrier and his mule. He had never left it, nor had he ever tired of it. His eyes were thankful and rejoiced in the detail of the earth as if he had been reborn each morning with the sun. His faith was humble and complete. His theology was the theology of Caladonga. He read the pastorals of a bishop whom he had never seen, bidding him guard against this and that heresy, and this and that deadly sin. ‘Nay, but there is no deadly sin,’ said Padre Francisco. Caladonga had no sin that he could not readily forgive, and to him Caladonga was the world.

As he sat on the bank of the stream, a peasant came to him and saluted him. His name was Castor He-of-the-Oranges. He had no other surname. Castor stood as if ashamed, with bent head and folded hands, waiting for the old man to speak to him. Padre Francisco looked at him sorrowfully.

‘Does it trouble you still, Castor?’ he asked.

‘Yes. You must exorcise it, *padre*. It will not go away.’

'Castor, Castor, that which has been created should not be hurt.'

'Then do it gently, *padre!* My house is unhappy, and you must help us. We cannot sleep for the noises and the drifting lights, but because you told us to be forgiving we have borne with them. We summoned the *curandera*, the wise woman —'

'That was sin, my son,' interrupted Padre Francisco, shaking his silver head.

'I know it, *padre* — but what were we to do? The spirit pinched her and she ran away shrieking. That too we could forgive, for the *curandera* was insolent and demanded money. But now we dare not be patient any longer. This morning I found my two oxen tied together by the hairs of their tails. They were sweating with panic, and must be bled or they will die. Without our oxen we should starve. You must help us, *padre.*'

'So be it then,' said Padre Francisco.

He rose. The eddies of the breeze played around his cassock, moulding it to his spare figure with love, as if he had been a young girl in whom the winds delighted.

Together they walked along the stream. When they came to the village bridge Padre Francisco stopped.

'Castor,' he asked, 'if it were a mischievous boy who played these tricks on you, you would not cast him out of your house forever?'

'But it is not a boy,' said the peasant simply.

The old man sighed, and went on alone towards his church.

Castor with his wife and children waited for him at the door of their white cottage. The faded blue of the lintels and twisted balconies held all the colors of the sky. Two orange trees stood in the garden with late fruit still showing like flowers among the leaves. The spirit haunted the house because he loved it, not because he must.

Now wearing his stole and carrying a flask of holy water, Francisco came to them and blessed them. Humbly he

prayed that he might be worthy, and forthwith began the conjuration. Severe and terrible was the Latin, but Padre Francisco's voice was gentle.

'I adjure thee, Old Serpent —' he began.

But it was no command. He was the superior and knew that he would be obeyed; therefore he had no need of vehemence.

'*Audi ergo, Satana, et time!* Hear therefore, Satan, and fear! Conquered and prostrate, retire!'

Padre Francisco meant what he said, for it was a naughty deed to tie his parishioner's oxen together by the tails. He hoped that the spirit would not be very frightened, but he intended that it should retire.

Five psalms he said, and sprinkled the house with holy water; then again five psalms and for a third time five. The last was *Ecce quam bonum* — behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! As the old man intoned the psalm, he heard the words echoed to a melody that soared in a golden treble over his voice.

'*Dominus vobiscum,*' said Padre Francisco.

'*Et cum spiritu tuo,*' answered They-of-the-Oranges.

'*Et cum spiritu tuo,*' said a grateful voice as of one passing through the doorway.

Padre Francisco walked back to the church and took off his stole. Then he went down to the seashore and sat upon the sand of the cove, for he was sorrowful and wished to be alone.

The cove was like an inland pool. The sea entered through an archway, and above the packed swell of the Atlantic the sheep pastured on a roof of green turf. From the horns of the crescent-shaped beach where Padre Francisco sat, two low cliffs converged upon the archway; through the entry he could see an anchored boat lifting and falling on the open sea, and beyond it the horizon. At his feet the water was pale green, trans-

parent over the shelving sand; under the cliffs to right and to left of him it was blue and purple, and brown shadows glided about their business.

There indeed was Padre Francisco in the midst of love. The shepherd above the arch called to him good-day. The fisherman in the boat waved a hand, and held up a creel of rock bass for him to see. A cormorant which sat like an old serpent — it was Padre Francisco's metaphor — upon a ledge of rock straightened its sinuous neck, swooped and landed in the ripples at his feet. The great black bird sidled up to him, blinking its eyes. It looked at him long and fearlessly, as if judging his worth. Its pupils were red and inset with curious reflections.

'What is good and what is evil?' thought Padre Francisco. 'I can see no evil, and therefore I will pray for guidance.'

Now this was not accounted a sin to Padre Francisco, for, as the whims of a sick child may command its parents, so were Heaven and Hell disturbed by the vagaries of this earth. 'What is good?' asked the advance guard of the angels. 'What is evil?' asked the left wing of the armies of Satan.

And Satan went to and fro upon the earth and longed for the ancient days, for he could not recognize his servants or his enemies. There were those who destroyed the Church for the sake of Faith, and those who destroyed Faith for the sake of the Church. Nor did death decide the loyalties of a perverse generation. Austere, religious souls floated to Heaven and declared themselves atheists. The worldly plunged downwards into Hell, where they were found to be clerics of blameless life and irreproachable morality.

But Satan knew that the earth, though it was but a little earth, was greatly beloved in Heaven as in Hell. Therefore he drew up a great document in Hebrew and Latin and letters of fire, which began 'FORASMUCH AS WE SATAN ARE AT A

Loss' and resolved itself into magnificent periods upon the inalienable rights of the High Contracting Parties. But in Heaven his meaning was understood. It was made known to him that he had only to choose an acceptable ambassador for Heaven to be represented at his Court.

He asked for Michael, since they had been friends in the fresh morning of eternity, and as enemies they had respected one another. And Michael took up his residence in Hell, heralded by four secretaries to the Embassy who were the four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

Many were the banquets and rejoicings at the Embassy. The windless night of the damned was rich with music. David came down and played the harp for them, and Nero's violin wailed upwards into chaos borne on the winged feet of Saint Cecilia at the organ. Pan composed a symphony on dawn, and played it on his pipe, accompanied by the trumpeters of an Archangel's Guard.

And on a certain evening Satan and Michael walked in the garden of the Embassy and wept together that the simplicity of earth was lost.

'There are many who believe in you,' said the Devil, 'but so few left who believe in us. And now the time has come for one of the last of them to die. May we give him a gift, Michael?'

'Why not?' asked Michael.

'Because he is one of your servants,' Satan explained. 'A certain Padre Francisco of Caladonga in Galicia.'

'I am weary of Spanish priests,' said Michael.

'I am weary of Spanish anarchists,' said Satan.

'What has he done for your people?' asked Michael.

'He has pitied them,' said the Devil. 'By all I hear, I think he is a saint.'

'And a Christian too?' the Archangel asked.

'As in the ancient days, Michael, when saints were saints and the Tempter tempted.'

And Michael perceived that, exchanging one courtesy for another, he could obtain for his Embassy the one dignity that it lacked.

'Satan,' he said, 'I need a chaplain.'

'I am old,' answered the Devil, 'but not a bigot. Myself, I would willingly attend a service. But I do not know if my people would stand it. I really do not.'

'Even if my chaplain were Padre Francisco of Caladonga?'

'I will have a look at him,' said Satan.

Now it was at this moment in the time of earth that the cormorant sidled up to Padre Francisco.

'You can have your chaplain,' said the Devil, restoring his spirit to eternity. 'But what of the gift my people would present to him?'

'We give you his death,' answered Michael.

Padre Francisco lay back upon the sand with his hands crossed at his throat. He was tired, and it was good to feel the strength of his beloved earth against his back and the warmth of the sun upon his body. He closed his eyes. A ripple of water like the streaming arrow at the bows of a light boat formed in the archway and curled towards him across the cove. In the brown and purple shadows of the cliffs seven ripples formed upon his right hand, and seven ripples upon his left. Smaller than the first they were, and shaped like cupids' bows; they might have been moulded to the breasts of

women advancing through the water; they took on the colors of the sun like little breaking waves. The sheep above the arch moved away, and the shepherd followed them; there was, as it were, a sea haze forming upon the turf, and he was afraid to stay. Behind Padre Francisco the grasses of the fields waved in the wind, but there were many winds from many quarters, and the ranks of the flowers bent and straightened as the spirits of earth passed on towards the cove.

The ripple that had formed under the arch reached the shore, and Padre Francisco was awakened by the singing of many voices. He sat up, and then leapt to his feet in wonder and in joy at those who compassed him about. His lips parted and his eyes were full of tears. He opened his arms as if to gather into them the massed armies of the spirits, and he cried: —

'Lo! Before I die I have seen the glory of the living earth!'

The angels caught up Padre Francisco from the midst of his lovers, and took him into Heaven and robed and anointed him. The Saints received him into their number and led him out to the gates, chanting in procession. Then, olive-crowned, borne upon the wings of doves with satyrs dancing before and behind, guarded by the drawn swords of the squadrons of the Prince of Darkness, Padre Francisco entered into Hell.

NO PARKING

BY ARTHUR POUND

I

A STORE in a museum sounds a little out of place when you first hear of it. But standing before the old-time country store exhibit in the Municipal Museum of Rochester, New York, you realize it deserves preservation as an antiquity. That kind of store, once a potent institution in the social life of western New York, has now vanished from those parts to live on in rural backwaters and mountain slopes.

The shift from animal to motorized transportation has affected every phase of our social environment. It destroyed the country general store in well-motorized areas and now clutters the streets of business centres so that trade is being hampered in the great urban general stores. This article is a layman's attempt to examine the parking problem with relation to the city trading areas. The interests at stake are so valuable that one may reasonably expect merchants and landlords to act with more celerity than the general public. The public is sadly inconvenienced by the immobile automobile, but the existence of great stores is actually threatened by it.

The automobile killed the country store. Customers, responding to the pull of advertising, could go farther for their goods in search of lower prices and wider selections. They changed their gait, but not their goad. The urban department store, which had its greatest development in the period including the maturity of the streetcar and the adolescence of the automobile, is also a general store.

Although larger and better organized, it is still an omnium-gatherum, stocked to meet all common family wants. Competing department stores cluster in locations accessible to mass transportation facilities, of which the street railway was once the most potent. The trend toward concentration continued as long as streets in and near the shopping districts could hold the parked vehicles of retail buyers without blocking the essential movement of merchandise in and out of the area.

When that point was reached, the benefits of centralization began to fade. The general store took the first hesitant steps in a retreat toward the country. Some of the well-centred department stores established branches in residential areas in order that their prospective customers might trade there without too much lost time and motion. New department stores began to arise in the suburbs, where cheap land provided more parking space. The great mail-order houses, holding their hand until sure that streetcars were vanishing as automobiles increased, put millions into peripheral emporia, with ample parking spaces of their own roundabout. Chain stores spread swiftly; even the unchained village storekeeper benefited when his customers found that the difficulty of buying in the near-by urban centre decreased the lure of advertised bargains. Occasionally a crossroads country store, which by some miracle of merchandising had kept fairly alert and efficient through its time of trouble, discovered that its

isolated location had regained pulling power.

Decentralization of merchandising is society's defeatist answer to automobiles abandoned in shoals by their owners.

A pedestrian may be defined as a person on his way from one motorcar to another. A traffic count in your city would probably show that 80 per cent of all persons passing the enumeration points were traveling in automobiles, and only 20 per cent in streetcars or on foot. Of the foot travelers in sight in any city, a good portion are on their way to their own automobiles, which are lying in wait for them somewhere near by. Cars without drivers constitute a parking problem which daily becomes more acute and depressing. On its solution depends the shape — and perhaps even the fate — of the city of the future.

Dynamic traffic is easier to control than static traffic. Anyone at the wheel is better than no one at the wheel. A combination of public money, engineering skill, and traffic police can cope with automobiles in motion, but not those in suspended motion. The moment a motorist leaves his machine, it becomes a bulky nuisance. Try to imagine rail transport without adequate sidings and stations, or airplane traffic without proper landing fields and storage spaces. Every motorist finds himself often in the position of an aviator with no place to land his machine. But with the aviator this predicament is accidental and dangerous; with the motorist it is merely a commonplace irritation, all the more galling because there is nothing he can do, by himself, to relieve his sense of frustration.

Picture that motorist, even as you and I, traveling slowly along, one block after another, with one eye on the curb, seeking a place to leave a car while slipping into a particular store for a purchase. There's the store, as inviting as ever, but all curb space is already occupied, much of it by office workers whose cars are present for all day. So the harried un-

fortunate rolls along block after block, as I have done a thousand times, wondering if centralized merchandising makes sense.

II

None of our cities were designed for motor traffic, and only in the West were they young enough and small enough, when the automobile arrived en masse, to adapt themselves even measurably to the new traffic medium. Los Angeles, blooming late in a favorable setting, — a big country with no winter, — has marched with the motorcar successfully. To-day it accommodates the highest automobile saturation — more than one car per family — with less inconvenience than any other city. New York City, with only half as many cars per capita, has far more trouble with them. California, with one motorcar to two and a half persons, is the best-equipped state and the most motor-wise in the Union. This might indicate that automobile congestion is not beyond avoidance.

But whereas Los Angeles could control the problem by taking thought in advance, other cities have had to adopt drastic renovations. In the famous Loop district of Chicago, great retail stores were built in answer to public convenience. Streetcars were then the favorite means of transport, and all lines reached the Loop. Land values soared; the city budget inexorably became based upon tax collections from those favored blocks. Then the transportation habits of the people changed and the Loop began to lose trade, simply because the people could not get to the stores. Parked automobiles were in the way.

How many automobiles? Not many, considering the mischief they wrought merely by standing there. In the whole Loop, the curbs could accommodate only 1100 automobiles. Suppose rigid enforcement — and enforcement never became quite that good — allowed each parked car only an hour of occupancy. In that case the Loop could accommo-

date only 8800 cars in a day, not a twentieth of those whose drivers sought to enter on rubber tires for trading purposes. All sorts of compromises were tried without success. Parking — any sort of parking — was out of place in the Chicago Loop. But when experts recommended no parking, the mercantile interests tried to shout them down. If people could not park near the stores, who would come to trade?

Ten years ago a 'no parking' rule was applied to the Loop in desperation. Demand for off-the-curb parking space in and near the Loop soon began to create supply. Lots were cleared to provide parking at a price which would recover at least tax charges. A building boom began in garages designed primarily for storage. In the Loop and around its outer edges arose scores of these structures. This response might not appear so promptly everywhere; financial Chicago acted because that district possessed a unique prestige over a wide region. Pulling power had become so firmly established that investors felt sure of returns. San Francisco has recently lifted its Market Street district out of the dilemma in much the same way, and New York is now trying it on certain cross streets in the mid-town area.

Every well-established metropolitan shopping district is now beset with similar difficulties. During the depression, automobile registration held stationary, while facilities both for motion and for parking increased. Public works provided better traffic flow and more curb space; high taxes and lowered rents led to the wrecking of obsolescent buildings and the establishment of commercial parking lots. Adversity forced a partial advance toward one ideal of city planners — the creation of open spaces in what had been closely built areas. Downtown Detroit is the outstanding example of tax-enforced clearance. But many of these clearances were motions of despair by landlords and lessees to recover taxes on properties in distress. It is reasonable

to expect that many of these lots will be taken out of their present use when new building begins.

Meantime automobile registration in the nation has again risen. Soon it may reach 30,000,000 registrations — one car to every 4.5 persons. A prospective saturation point — although one uses the term dubiously because this industry has been confounding doleful prophecy from its birth — is the California figure of one car to 2.5 persons. While the rest of the states push on from the present 4.5 ratio toward the 2.5 potential, areas of greatest business concentration will find themselves embarrassed in this race between vehicles and facilities.

Just as the misery of the Chicago Loop was caused by relatively few cars, so the margin between convenience and inconvenience in traffic is always narrow. One car or truck double-parked in a narrow street, because there is no space at the curb, doubles or trebles the interference factor of every car in the block. It is the last drop that saturates the solution. The addition of a million cars to the nation's total, unless terminal facilities are provided for them, may easily double the parking difficulties in congested trading areas.

Several leading cities have found it advisable to reroute traffic through express highways, along which no parking is allowed, and stop lights are synchronized according to a considerably higher speed than can possibly be accomplished on streets jammed with parked and double-parked cars. By prohibition of parking on ten cross-town streets, travel time across Manhattan has been reduced from thirty to seven minutes, and traffic on near-by streets has been greatly relieved.

The apathy with which the great downtown merchants and their landlords await this threat is no advertisement of their acumen. A fortunate few are able to escape to more accessible sites, with all or part of their operations and fortunes, but the majority are tied

by long leases and large investments. Outlying and suburban trade is growing, not so much from the transfer of old stores as from the establishment of new ones. The mail-order houses were foresighted in placing new stores where customers would come to them instead of taking their stores to harassed customers in the traditional gathering places. General Wood reported \$200,000,000 as the annual trade of Sears-Roebuck retail establishments, and expressed the thought that historians one day would marvel at our stupidity in building closely when the decentralizing motorcar was at our command. Thus, serious failures are bound to result if proper terminals for motor transportation are not provided in the downtown areas.

III

But why make the effort? Why fight to preserve the congestion? Why not spread our activities now that we have the chance? Just this: people crowd together for convenience in adjusting their affairs; each urban centre is a complex of mutual advantages, and the present frame is worth preserving since the alternative — decentralization — cannot duplicate those advantages. A professional man, for instance, rents an office in a skyscraper inhabited by scores of his competitors whom he can consult in person merely by changing floors in an elevator. A woman coming downtown to shop may wish to compare prices and goods in many stores of like nature. A buyer arriving to make wholesale purchases saves time when he finds his prospects grouped. The megapolitan urge now brings together great herds of standing automobiles whose presence defeats many of the benefits of congestion; yet those benefits could hardly be restored by decentralization. Mere spaciousness is clearly not a perfect answer.

Decentralization creates problems of its own; here are a few of them. On the broad highways entering many cities,

there is little cross movement, either for trade or for social purposes. The stream of traffic divides the people even more effectively than a river, and its passage is more dangerous. Rural and suburban slums, along wide traffic arteries, mushroom even more quickly than urban ones decay. Roadsides are now too often hideous and too frequently vicious through the spreading of borderline activities once concentrated in small areas. Distribution costs have been tremendously increased. Police surveillance can hardly keep up with the spread. Decentralization forced branch banking, which appeared first in the most highly motorized state, California. Once banking operations were scattered, bank robbery began to boom. Moving payrolls and valuable merchandise on open highways becomes perilous in proportion to distance. Extending urban activities on the ground level seems likely to handicap some of the more delicate and precious results of gregariousness.

So there are excellent reasons, both selfish and social, to fight intelligently for the preservation of the best urban trading areas. One sees individual firms and corporations undertaking all manner of expensive and desperate dodges. Merchant A provides parking space on his roof; B clears a ground-floor parking lot near by; C erects a tiered-deck structure to accommodate customers' cars; D buys a distant parking site and offers free bus connections. Each tries to outdo the other; the motive is competition instead of coöperation, and the streets remain as cluttered as before. Parking lots and new garages testify to the willingness of capital and management to provide facilities.

Under these impacts the stability essential to sound investment in parking facilities is hard to find. A multi-story garage represents an investment of \$400 to \$1100 per car, a mechanical parking garage \$1000 to \$2000 per car. During the depression 90 per cent of all ramp garages defaulted on their bonds, and nearly every mechanical parker experienced finan-

cial distress. To-day the financial risk is discouragingly high. The open lot provides the least expensive parking, but cannot be depended upon for permanence. Yet it is clear that provision of terminal facilities for motor vehicles is a next great building task for the American city. Just as bridge-and-tunnel building flourished in the optimistic days of the last boom, so the building of automobile terminals might well flourish in the next one — except that investors remember what happened to many of those 'speed-the-traffic' enterprises so blithely undertaken. Apparently what is most needed is a combination of monopoly, to decrease risk, with municipal supervision, to ensure fair charges.

This is tenable middle ground between two extremes — public ownership on the one hand, and private initiative on the other. There are engineers who insist that, because adequate motor terminals are as important as highways in assuring maximum flow of traffic, those terminals should be built at public expense, with benefit of condemnation proceedings and at lowest interest rates. The parallel is not quite accurate, however. By and large, the highway job is beyond private means, while the storage job is not. Land investment is already made; land owners are already interested in putting their properties to more productive use; in fact, they frequently overdo garage building. Individual terminals need not be enormous, provided there are plenty of them; there are sound arguments against oversize and in favor of intelligent placing of storage spaces correlated to strict widths. A huge terminal with narrow approaches might do more harm than good. When unrestricted private initiative applies itself to transportation, it frequently overdoes or does badly, and next tries, naturally, to pass the costs of error on to the consumer. Planning and regulation in the public interest are needed to provide maximum incentive to private interest at minimum public expense.

A balanced plan of this kind was proposed by Miller McClintock, director of the Harvard Bureau for Street Traffic Research, to the National Conference on City Planning. Mr. McClintock is convinced that cities should set up Parking Authorities, similar to those now functioning in the case of bridges and other public works. A body so constituted, after surveying its city, might well arrange with the city government to encourage construction of motor terminals. The simplest way of doing this would be to reduce the tax burden for a definite number of years on certain sites by virtue of their quasi-public utility in connection with parking. This assurance would bring in capital at low rates for clearance and construction purposes.

With this leverage on taxes, the Authority could control design and type of construction, ensure proper spacing of the projects, and, if necessary, regulate rates. It could stimulate necessary building and restrain unnecessary building. Communities inclined toward municipal ownership might conceivably use the public credit to build on suitable locations which have reverted to public ownership through nonpayment of taxes. Constructive public action on this general line might hold a large part of the space opened by the depression, and develop sites now used only on the ground level to greater capacity as a means of coping with the approaching deluge.

IV

The new approach to a solution of the parking problem is less concerned with police enforcement than with providing facilities. Enforcement is easy when accommodations are available, because the motoring public soon adjusts itself to paying for car shelter and protection. After a little grumbling, the customer finds he is getting something worth while for his parking money — ease of mind, saving of time, protection of property. No more broken fenders, tire thefts, po-

lice summonses. The individual budget soon becomes adjusted to reasonable charges. But where adequate facilities are not available, the motorist is a stubborn animal. He will stand only so much police prodding and pushing before he takes his revenge at the polls. No drastic ordinance in restraint of curb parking can be expected to work by itself, and there are not enough police officers to enforce the letter of the law when the public reaction is sluggish or hostile. Parking meters help enforcement in two ways — by keeping thrifty parkers out of the controlled area and by registering overstays automatically. In small cities they ease the situation materially; but since their use adds nothing to the parking area, they cannot cure the acute congestion of metropolitan centres.

Since an automobile requires 100 square feet and 800 cubic feet of storage space, retail shopping districts can hardly hold their prestige by relying altogether on ground-level parking lots. Parking decks, in connection with department stores, offer the greatest structural economy. Studies made for Kaufman Brothers of Pittsburgh indicated that a single parking deck would pay for itself in two months. Low-cost parking is essential; how much will the traffic bear? At this point enter the engineers, with new types of construction especially designed for parking needs. Obviously shelter and heat are not so important as space; motorists leave their cars outside in all weathers and are accustomed to paying for storage in the open.

Allen Brett, Detroit engineer who has been fighting automobile confusion for ten years, is designing buildings along this line, although his contribution to parking progress is much broader than this particular phase. It was Brett who ten years ago sounded a warning to constructors which time has reinforced until it is now quoted as basic: 'Take care of the parking demand created or your building will obsolete before it is up.'

Says Mr. Brett: 'In some areas land is

too costly to be left in open parking lots, yet ordinary garage construction may be too expensive to provide safe investment or permit a parking fee satisfactory to the customer. In such cases, the tiered deck may be the solution. It consists of a series of platforms one above the other, with connecting ramps. There are no walls and no heating plant. If there is a basement, it should be filled with cars. The Eliot "Cage Garage" in Boston and the Kaufman deck in Pittsburgh are examples on a small scale of what might be done *in extenso* if enough capital and space were available. A splendid opportunity exists in Chicago, where I drafted plans for a similar structure to use the air rights over the Illinois Central tracks north of Randolph Street. In my opinion cities might well construct and operate parking structures which are properly spaced and designed.'

V

The automobile, in its way, knocked city planning out of stride. There was a time when city planners took for their ideal the City Beautiful. They went in for large parks and sweeping vistas. Their open spaces were devoted either to æsthetics or to recreation; they could not foresee the time when space might serve society best by being left open and unadorned. Those cities are fortunate which, like Chicago, can use part of a spacious park system for parking cars. Gradually, automobile pressure has brought a new emphasis into city planning. The aim now is to coördinate beauty with utility, to make the city convenient as well as beautiful, on the theory that no one is likely to be pleased with a city which unduly complicates normal existence.

Some of the new studies in social planning, like the designs of Norman Bel Geddes, are noble visualizations of the bliss which might envelop future travelers and parkers if dreams come true. Broad limited ways for uninterrupted travel above street level; com-

plete safety for pedestrians, ample provision for cars at rest, open spaces around all buildings. This is rescuing the city with a vengeance; no sane person would want to live anywhere else if the byways necessary for slow motion and static traffic were as thoroughly developed as the highways for swift motion. But such perfection is hardly attainable within the life of this middle-aged motorist.

One suggestion of the new city planners, however, might well be pushed far in our time. This is the proposal to establish interior lines for future building operations when present structures are replaced by new ones. Exterior building lines are everywhere regulated to provide street and sidewalk space, a universally recognized need. Now that getting automobiles off the street is equally necessary to social convenience and safety, the interiors of blocks might well be conserved for this purpose. If all structures occupying the four sides of a block combined their service and heating departments, placing them underground, the space would leave open an interior large enough to accommodate the automobiles of tenants and also to provide for off-the-street loading and unloading of both customers and goods. Creating of double frontage, with relation to light, air, and merchandising, more than offsets in rental value the loss of enclosed space.

Proofs of these benefits are evident on Park Avenue in New York City, where two apartment hotels — the Marguery and '277 Park' — have large open courts, privately policed against intrusion by the public, for the accommodation of guests' cars and for service needs. It is significant that both hotels occupy railroad property; trust railroads to appreciate the need of terminals and sidings. In both hotels the inside rooms on

the courts command premiums, because of their quiet and landscaped vistas, thus reversing the usual balance between inside and outside accommodation. Pioneering along this line has been done by Mason in Massachusetts and Brett in Cleveland, while Los Angeles recently adopted an ordinance applying this principle to apartment-house developments. Here is a logical innovation which an established Parking Authority might push with advantage to any congested area. This procedure might change the whole picture of urban congestion for the better in thirty years, without either public expense or unfairness to any vested or speculative interest.

VI

If I had written this article several years ago, I would have pointed it at the average motorist, who, like myself, is a sorry victim of automobile congestion. But the appeal to public convenience seldom rouses as prompt a response as the appeal to private interest. Consequently I have narrowed this presentation down to the threat which parking pressure aims at merchants and landlords in urban shopping districts. Self-preservation should rouse them to rally their fellow citizens to the defense of their cities. If, in addition, they had the support of the automotive industry, the forward movement would soon become irresistible. It goes without saying that parking troubles limit automobile sales and profits. But since parking is a problem with infinite local variations, curative moves must start locally, and cannot expect or deserve aid from a national industry until they have won definite and substantial support at home. The first steps are up to the defenders of the besieged citadels.

THE WORDS OF THE EXCITED BOY

BY HARRY BROWN

If trees be women, marry one and die;
If hills be sleepers, wake them where they lie.
Let Nature state your reason.
If God be air, then praise air on your knees:
If Death be midnight, noon is what man sees
Within his seeing season.

If stones be stories, watch them warp as told:
If valleys virgins, note to whom they're sold
And, too, the price they're bringing.
If light be history, puzzle out the words:
If we be dust, please take us where the birds
Are seeking food and singing.

— If trees are women, I would have a tree
Break from the ground and leave to comfort me
Upon this April morning.
If hills are sleepers, I would have them rise
And come within the highest range of eyes,
The Seven Sights adorning.

If God is air, I'll worship every breath,
Until I'm smothered by the mask of Death
And have no use for praise.
If Death is midnight, I shall make my day
With neither moon nor dark; and in that way
Be my own Lord of Days.

If stones are stories, I shall know them all,
And carry them within the bridal wall
For stairs and braces.
If vales are virgins, I will buy their hearts,
And then release their bodies from the marts,
And send them to their races.

If light is history, I shall change my name
And, as the Prophet, tell from whence we came,
And of our sorrow.
If I am dust, then I shall never change
My form, but lie within my human range
For Earth to borrow.

RAVENS IN DEVON

BY HENRY WILLIAMSON

I SUPPOSE most people remember, from their childhood days, the story of Elijah in the wilderness being fed by ravens. From the hazes of childhood I recall a picture of an old man with a beard, holding up one arm, and two black birds flying down to him. In early youth, whenever the picture came into my mind, I thought vaguely of the birds bringing berries, or wild grapes. It was possible that the hermit had tamed two young birds, and that stray visitors saw him take the food from the ravens, and perhaps put it between his lips for the birds to retake. A charming picture of the old philosopher and visionary in his retreat — one of his lighter moments. But as for birds feeding him seriously, it was absurd. Why should two birds of the Crow family bring food to a human being?

But to-day I am not sure that the feeding of Elijah was a mere fable, embodied into the history of a desert nomadic tribe. My son, looking over my shoulder as I write, informs me that the ravens brought bread and meat to Elijah twice a day, at morning and evening. How about that? Berries might have been dropped accidentally by the birds, and the starving Elijah comforted by the thought that Providence was with him; and afterwards the story got about, and became part of the tribal folklore. But bread and meat, regularly twice a day! What does one think about that?

One spring, a year or two ago, a pair of ravens built a nest in the fork of an oak tree. In April, when the young ravens

were out of the nest, a fledgling was picked up on the ground below. It appeared to be deserted by its parents, and so the finder put it, not without trepidation for the big beak which the bird opened in fear, into a basket and took it home. The raven very soon became tame and followed its mistress, croaking for food, and flying to perch on her head or shoulder. It grew into a large heavy bird, which bullied everything about the farm.

The raven would hide in the branches of a tree, and when it saw a cat returning with a rabbit it would fly down when the cat had passed, and let out a low-pitched *krok-krok*. Immediately the cat would drop the rabbit and flee. The first time the raven encountered it, the tomcat growled and spat and showed fight; but one dab of the raven's beak, gravely administered as though it were merely a rebuke for bad manners, sent the cat flying. Thereafter, when it heard the low, warning *krok-krok*, the cat would drop its rabbit and slink away.

But after a while, when it saw that the raven meant nothing personal, as it were, the cat merely dropped its rabbit and sat by while the raven killed it with blows of its beak and then picked out its favorite delicacy — the eyes. Afterwards, the cat could have the rabbit. Eventually the cat not only brought every rabbit it caught to the raven, but learned to obey the *krok-krok* call to proceed to the warrens to stalk and catch a rabbit for its corvine master! At any rate, that is what appeared to happen.

There was a spaniel dog in the farm-yard, chained to a barrel lying on its side — the dog's kennel. The wretched dog often used to bark, begging to be released from its prison. It barked furiously whenever it saw the raven approaching, for it was afraid of the bird. And no wonder! The raven used to steal its bones while the dog was asleep, and place them just outside the arc of movement made by the chained animal. Then it would tap the dog on the pate and hop back, making noises just like the dog growling. It used to bow and open its wings, and squint along its five-inch black beak, set with black bristles, obviously daring the dog to come near and attack it. The dog did that but once — when the raven dug a little hole between its nostrils. The bird became such a bully that its master threatened to shoot it, for it was, he said, spoiling his dog, which became afraid to leave the barrel and begin its dinner when the raven was near.

With human beings the raven was wary and inoffensive, although it trusted its mistress, who had first fed it. Something happened, however, in its second season, which almost caused the farmer to carry out his threat. And that was the disappearance of his ducklings. The first brood were picked up and swallowed, despite the agitated clucking of the hen foster-mother. The second brood were shut up in a stable with the hen. But the raven discovered a drain beside the door, and after peering within and cocking its head first on one side, then the other, as though listening intently, stepped back and *thought*. A bird *thinking*, exclaims the scientific reader. Well, let us continue the three-dimensional description. The raven stepped back and stared at the drain hole. After staring for some moments, it went forward with its feathers fluffed out, as though it were a hen, and, crouching by the hole, clucked like the hen when she was calling her fosterlings. Down the hole a duckling waddled, and was picked up and swal-

lowed. *Cluck-cluck-cluck*, and another duckling appeared and disappeared.

After that, the raven was caught and put into a wire-netting cage built on grass near the house. It spent much of its time quizzing other birds in the sky. One morning, early, its mistress saw a wild pair of ravens by the cage. And during the winter she observed it passing bits of food through the netting to one or another of the wild ravens. It was a time of hard weather, and the ground was frozen. When the spring came, she watched the caged bird again passing beakfuls of its plentiful larder to the wild birds. They flew off with full craws, westwards, in the direction of the headland where they had a nest. They returned for food, again and again.

When their young were flown — towards the end of April — the old pair began to dig a tunnel under the bottom of the wire netting. The tame raven's mistress feared they might be going to kill her pet, for this had been the fate of a tame raven in a neighboring valley. Her husband persuaded her to wait and see what happened. He would n't be sorry, anyway.

The tame raven did no work in the scheme for its liberation. It merely watched. Was it afraid? Was it dreading the moment when the two wilder, stronger birds would fall upon it and knock its head off? At last the tunnel was finished. The wild ravens croaked, and the tame raven crept forth — free. After talking together, the trio flew off towards the sea.

The tame raven remained away for some time, and its cage was left on the grass.

One morning the farmer's wife saw it back again in the cage. It croaked a welcome to her.

And that is all I know about the bird. But I no longer think to myself about the story of Elijah being fed with meat and bread by a pair of ravens as being a fable. I see no reason why it should not be literally true.

THE CASE FOR FRANCO

BY IAN D. COLVIN

I

I CAN well imagine the dismay of those Americans who had traveled in Spain over the news which has come to them from the Peninsula in the past eighteen months. It was so beautiful a country, its people were so courteous and so amiable, their life so pleasant, peaceful, and dignified, that the thought of them at mortal strife might have seemed not only tragic but incredible. A profound peace brooded over those wide shimmering plains and those lovely mountain valleys; those friendly peasants following their oxen or calling home their cattle; those happy families engaged in adoring their adorable children on their golden sea beaches; the grave and pious crowds which thronged their churches, even to the porch, for Sunday Mass; those gay religious festivals; those ancient sleepy cities, every narrow lane and trellised courtyard hinting at beauty and romance — how almost fantastic in its horror the thought that civil war had broken into such a paradise. And not civil war as we knew it in England and you knew it in America, waged within certain limits of decency and humanity by disciplined forces, but civil war to the knife, altogether ferocious and anarchical, as if hell itself were let loose, as if a beautiful face were suddenly distorted with fury to the likeness of a fiend.

Such was the first and general impression; but the handful of foreigners who lived in the Peninsula or had closely followed events and tendencies since the establishment of the Republic were, if

not less horrified, at least less surprised. They had even seen it coming.

There were the seeds of revolution and of civil war in the minds and policies of the fanatical factions that succeeded the mild government of King Alfonso. Señor Azaña and his friends, demagogues and radicals under the sway of the Grand Orient, egged on by the Socialists, opened vindictive war on the Church and the great landowners. The religious orders were proscribed; mobs were allowed to sack and burn convents and churches; the estates of the grandees were confiscated and many of the landowners themselves were banished to an unhealthy part of Africa. It was a legalized, thinly veiled war against the conservative part of the nation.

Now Spain is fundamentally a religious and conservative country. The forces of the Right, organized under Gil Robles, did not, indeed, succeed in securing an independent majority, but made themselves the strongest single party in the state, defeated the parties of the Left, and formed a coalition with the more moderate radicalism of Señor Lerroux.

The Socialists, defeated at the polls, showed very little respect for that principle of legitimacy which they now profess to cherish. Their leaders, Indalecio Prieto and Francisco Largo Caballero, incited their followers to violence. Señor A. Ramos Oliveira, now press agent to the Spanish Embassy in London, in that case found rebellion natural. 'Clerical-

ism' was the bane of progressive politics. 'Therefore, when three Clerical Ministers entered the Government with the Radical Party, on October 5, 1934, the Revolution broke out' (*The Drama of Spain, 1931-1936*).

It was a ferocious but short-lived war. Señor Companys declared for a separate republic in Catalonia, which was speedily repressed; Señor Azaña was found in hiding in Barcelona; the miners of Asturias, made of sterner stuff and armed with their favorite weapons, sticks of dynamite, wrecked their provincial capital of Oviedo. There was some sanguinary fighting, and the rebellion, moreover, served to unmask the sinister power of Soviet Russia in Spain. The Spanish section of the Comintern had been formed as far back as 1920, and a revolutionary school of exiled Catalans had been trained in Moscow; when the Republic offered them immunity they swarmed back into Spain; a stroke in trade-union politics, the affiliation of the National Confederation of Labor to the Profintern, gave the Communists an effective working force of 1,720,000 trade-unionists; for fifteen days the Soviet régime ruled in Asturias, and when it was beaten the official organ of Russian Communism declared with truth, 'The workers of the Asturias fought for Soviet power under the leadership of the Communists.'

Thus, two years before there was any thought of intervention by Italy and Germany, Soviet Russia had shown its red hand in Spain. And not in Spain only. In the Seventh World Congress of that laboratory of revolution, the Communist International, held at Moscow in 1935, the Secretary-General Dimitrov described the tactics by which Spain would be conquered in the name of Democracy, and the Congress declared, in the presence of Stalin, that 'the majority of the proletariat must be won for armed insurrection.' According to Dimitrov at that Congress, — and it is a noteworthy prediction, — one of the

most important means to the end of proletarian revolution would be a United Front Government.

Thus the Muscovite Dracula prepared to enter the fair body of Spain, and so it happened. The Lerroux Coalition — like most coalitions — sank into discredit: the Socialist leader, Prieto, by the promise of autonomy, worked on the simplicity of the Basques and so divided the Catholic vote; the elections of February 1936 were a narrow victory for the Popular Front of Radicals, Socialists, Communists, and Anarchists. In a Cortes of 473, this combination had a majority of 39, although it polled half a million less votes than the parties of the Centre and the Right — and this despite intimidation at the polls.

'At the urge of irresponsible agitators,' Señor Alcalá Zamora, the ex-President, afterwards stated in the *Journal de Genève*, 'the mob seized the balloting papers, with the result that false returns were sent in from many places.' Moreover, as he goes on to say, the Popular Front immediately appointed a committee to 'verify' the elections, which they did with so much zeal that 'in certain provinces where the opposition had been victorious all the mandates were annulled, and the candidates who were friendly to the Popular Front, although they had been beaten, were proclaimed Deputies.' By such means the Popular Front majority of 39 was raised to 118, and the opposition left practically powerless. The President, the Republican Alcalá Zamora, although his mandate was not due to expire until December 11, 1937, was arbitrarily dismissed, and Señor Azaña, by that time a mere helpless tool of the Socialists, was put in his place.

Having thus confirmed their power, these fanatical factionaries proceeded to behave as if the rest of Spain had no right to exist. The revolutionary mob had in part already taken charge. In the short space of time between February 16 and June 16, 1936, the country had gone

down into chaos. With 113 general and 228 partial strikes to dislocate industry, business had become impossible. The Conservative Party was in a state of siege; 69 of its offices had been destroyed and 312 attacked; its newspapers suffered the same fate, 10 newspaper offices being demolished and 33 assaulted; 209 people were killed and 1287 injured in the streets; 160 churches were burnt down and 251 partly destroyed. In this ferocious attack on the religious and political faith of a great part of the Spanish people, the police and magistracy were either powerless or forbidden to interfere; 30,000 truculent rebels of the 1934 revolt, and with them a horde of criminals, had been liberated from jail upon the political victory of their friends and patrons; employers were forced to take back into their employment the ringleaders of previous disorders; industry had become impossible, trading precarious; the whole country sloped steeply down to anarchy and ruin.

II

The same forces which worked to destroy the religion and disrupt the civil life of Spain worked also to undermine her army. General Franco, who had always set his face against any military intervention in the politics of Spain, in June 1936 was constrained to address a grave warning to Casares Quiroga, then Minister for War. 'Lately,' he wrote, 'commanding officers, most of them of brilliant reputation and highly respected in the Army, have been deprived of their posts . . . and these have been bestowed upon subordinates classified by 99 per cent of their colleagues as men poorly endowed with the qualities those posts demand.'

There is evidence besides that the Communists, in the spring of 1936, were themselves plotting a *coup d'état*. Thus, in the Left Socialist paper *Claridad*, for April 11 of that year, there is the report of a meeting held the day before in

the Europa Cinema, Madrid, at which Largo Caballero accepted the programme drawn up for Spain by the Moscow Comintern in July 1935. And Señor Diez, the Secretary of the Communist Party, described the revolutionary plan: 'Once the unification of the trade-unions has been effected, we must see to the formation of the confederation of workers and peasants so that we may be able to use them to replace the government the day we overthrow it. We must also constitute a united Militia of the Proletariat which will be the embryo of the Red Army when the Revolution triumphs in Spain.'

They went further: in the preceding March a group of experts in revolution arrived in Barcelona from Russia, and two Russian ships, the *Neva* and the *Jevet*, landed arms for the Communists at Seville and Algeciras. Moreover, the Communists in Paris sent to their comrades of the Red Militia in Madrid detailed plans for attacks on barracks and the assassination of officers. Generals were to be attacked, preferably in their rooms, by 'picked men who will not recoil before any obstacle and who will deal severely with anyone who opposes them without regard to age or sex.' All party leaders were to be arrested 'under pretext of affording them protection.' On the same pretext 'prominent capitalists' were to be seized: 'With regard to these, violence must be avoided unless resistance is offered, and they must be made to hand over the sums in their current accounts at the bank, as well as all stocks and shares. In cases where they attempt to mislead, the culprit is to be removed, as well as all the members of his family, without any exception' (*Écho de Paris*, January 14, 1937).

There is reason to believe that the date of this revolution had actually been fixed for May 1, 1936; it was postponed to May 10 and then to June 20, and then again put off.

'There are in my possession,' says Mr. F. T. Rogers, in his *Spain: A Tragic*

Journey, 'photostatic copies of plans seized in Anarchistic headquarters which detail fully the projects of Anarchists and Communists to seize the full power in Madrid, even before the murder of Calvo Sotelo.'

The motive of that crime is shrewdly suspected by M. Jacques Bardoux. 'When,' he says in *Chaos in Spain*, 'a war is wanted, it is elementary strategy to get the enemy to declare it.' If that were the motive, it could hardly have been better calculated. Señor Sotelo was one of the leaders of the Conservative opposition, a statesman, eloquent, courageous, patriotic. He had just delivered in the Cortes a scathing indictment of the Frente Popular, the anarchy which it patronized, the ruination which it was causing; and 'La Pasionaria,' a wild woman of the Communist Party, had shouted: 'You have made your last speech!'

In the small hours of the morning his home was raided by fifteen police under Captain Moreno, in Car No. 17 of the Republican Police Force; he was dragged out of his house and his bullet-pierced body was found in a neighboring cemetery. The facts were notorious; Ministers professed to be shocked, but the Government did nothing either to punish the criminals or to prevent a repetition of the crime. The 'bourgeoisie,' the 'capitalist class,' the civilian and the officer of the Army, saw their impending doom in the fate of their political leader. They were faced with the onus of revolt, and on their behalf General Franco accepted it. But it was fundamentally a movement of defense and of preservation. The decent people of Spain had to defend themselves or die.

III

This dreadful dilemma is manifest in all that happened in Government territory when the civil war began. The Government by decree disbanded the Army and handed out arms promiscu-

ously to Socialist mobs, the released rebels of the Asturias rebellion, often to mere boys and to criminals. There were swift massacres of the officers in various garrisons; in part of the Navy the officers were seized by the sailors and thrown into the sea; gangs of ruffians, armed by the Government, instigated by the Communists, terrorized both cities and villages. People suspected of Conservative sympathies — the churchgoers, the well-to-do, those who wore hats and white collars — were accused of such crimes as 'Fascism,' lined up against walls, or taken to the cemetery gates and massacred in droves. In some cases the lists of subscribers to Conservative newspapers were considered sufficient evidence, in others envy and spite supplied the fatal testimony; in Madrid 'popular tribunals,' like Fouquier-Tinville's in revolutionary Paris, tried batches of the bourgeoisie for offenses unknown to any penal code and handed them over to the firing squads. Some methodical mind in the Police Bureau devised a system of photographing the victims for purposes of identification, and from these and other records it has been possible to compile a sum of these massacres, and we may therefore accept the estimate of a correspondent of the *Morning Post*, in May 1937, who put the total to April 1937 at about 60,000, a figure confirmed by a passage in Mr. Knoblauch's *Correspondent in Spain*: 'The accurate number of those killed behind the lines in the Spanish War will never be known. In their official reports to their respective governments the American, French, and English governments were said to have agreed that 60,000 for the Madrid area, 30,000 for the Valencia area, and 50,000 for the Barcelona area, would be conservative estimates.'

These figures, if they err, err on the under side. An old and trusted friend, Señor Luis Bolin, for many years London correspondent of the Madrid newspaper, *A.B.C.*, and Press Censor

with General Franco, told me some six months ago that after a careful survey it was estimated by those competent to judge that no less than three hundred thousand civilians and noncombatants had been slaughtered in Government territory since the outbreak of the Civil War.

As to the persons thus 'liquidated,' the priesthood may be supposed to come first: it is known that at least 6000 were so killed, besides several thousands of the 'religious' — monks, nuns, lay brothers, choristers, and so forth. Officers of the Army and Navy, members of such political parties of the Right as the Acción Popular, 'capitalists,' bankers and merchants, could expect no mercy, unless indeed they trekked their way over the frontier, or were hidden by faithful retainers, or found refuge in the embassies, or were kept in prison as 'hostages.' The fate of these 'reactionaries' was, possibly, to be expected; the progressive mind will be more shocked to hear that even the Radicals did not escape the general doom of the Spanish bourgeoisie. Thus the Radical ex-Prime Minister of Spain, Señor Alexander Lerroux, records: 'In the city and province of Valencia not only the Radical Deputies have been murdered, but in certain villages all the members of the Radical Party have been exterminated. At Málaga and Alicante the Radicals were literally hunted down. The blood toll taken of the Radical Party in Spain is far greater than that taken of the Church and, perhaps, than that taken of the Civil Guard, which was so savagely sacrificed' (*L'Illustration*, January 30, 1937).

IV

So much for the treatment of life under this democratic Government of Spain; let us now consider its treatment of property. It might be supposed from Socialist propaganda that the land belonged to a handful of grandes who between them rack-rented a helpless

peasantry. As a matter of fact, the large landowner is an exception. The radical measure of expropriation of 1932 applied only to eight out of fifty Spanish provinces, for the simple reason that in the rest further division was considered impracticable. In these eight provinces the estates of over 620 acres totaled 16,000,000 acres, divided among 8500 owners, which is an average of under two thousand acres per landowner; there were, besides, 55 estates of an average of 2365 acres; but even in those provinces of large estates there were, on the other hand, no less than 585,406 landowners, who held between them 10,600,000 acres, or an average of some 18 acres per owner.

These figures reduce the problem to its true proportions. As a matter of fact, the Act of 1932 dealt with a total of 1,440,000 acres belonging to 99 grandes, an average of about 14,545 acres per grandee. It actually decreed the expropriation of some 660,000 acres, of which, by the end of 1933, one third had been divided among 8552 peasants. Even so, the measure was considered vindictive and of little practical utility to the peasants concerned. In some cases these peasants actually appealed to be left under their old landowners, whom they knew and trusted. Now, however, Socialist propaganda asserts that 7½ million acres have been divided among the peasantry, which, if true, means some such revolution as dispossessed the kulaks in Russia, a revolution in which the small holders themselves were dispossessed and the whole agricultural system reduced to chaos.

As for the Church in Spain, vulgarly supposed to be fabulously rich: she has indeed infinite treasures, cathedrals, works of art, jewels dedicated to saints and Madonnas, and the magnificence which has cloaked her for centuries, but these are now nationalized and her means of existence are meagre enough. Already she had been expropriated by a long series of measures of State. In ex-

change for her properties the concordat of 1860 allowed her a revenue barely sufficient for the support of her clergy, her schools, and her hospitals, and in 1931 the Republic decreed the confiscation even of this revenue. The Church, then, in Spain was miserably poor; as for the religious orders, when the Republic set out to confiscate the property of the Jesuits it found an adverse balance of debt of two million dollars! What the Revolution has done is not so much to confiscate as to destroy. The churches were burnt; the sacred images and holy vessels were broken down for the gold, the silver, and the jewels of which they were made, and this spoliation was carried out with so much violence and knavery that the State profited little by the process.

As to private property in commerce and in industry, it can hardly be said to have survived the Frente Popular. The gold reserve of the Bank of Spain was taken and exported in violation of a fundamental law; house property was 'socialized' and no one knows at this moment to whom it belongs.

'Communist, Anarchist and Socialist Committees,' says Mr. Knoblaugh, 'raced each other to the choicest properties, the most luxurious homes, the most profitable industries. The first one to arrive posted a printed announcement, "*Incautado por la C.N.T.*" or "*Esta Casa ha sido Incautada por la U.G.T.*" (if the Anarcho-Syndicalists or Socialists won the race) or "*Controlado por el Partido Comunista*" if the Communists had won.' Those concerns which were seized were also robbed; their stock, their balances, and their safe deposits were taken; their management was put in the hands of committees of workmen, and ignorance and rapacity soon reduced them to ruin.

Foreign enterprises did not escape. The American Telephone Company at Barcelona was taken over by a Soviet and so mismanaged that the subscribers

had to be forced by threats of death to continue their subscription. The Barcelona Traction Light and Power Company and its subsidiaries, mainly British concerns (although registered under Spanish law), were taken over in the same way, and three million pesetas in gold belonging to one of them (the Ebro Company) was taken out of its private safe in the Royal Bank of Canada, Barcelona. In that great British concern, the Rio Tinto, the Labor leaders took over the mines and 'conceived the idea that the English staff would be held as hostages.' Only when General Franco conquered that part of Spain were practicable working conditions restored.

In such manner the whole commerce and industry of 'loyalist' Spain were reduced to ruin; the foreign staffs were 'evacuated,' the Spanish owners 'liquidated.' Thus stands that part of Spain under its Government to-day — its Government that is represented as a free and progressive democracy.

We are commonly told that, after all, it is a choice between two evils; that if there are excesses on the Government side, the alternative is the jack boot of a Fascist — a military dictatorship. The truth is that, although General Franco is a regular soldier, he is not a Fascist, and that he leads not a military force merely, but the greater part of the Spanish nation. He is even now in possession of two thirds of Spanish territory, and all the islands save one; moreover, wherever he has gone he has been hailed as a liberator by the noncombatant part of the population. He is defending law, order, and civilization in Spain, and if he has the assistance of Italy and Germany it is because they also feel themselves threatened by the same conspiracy. But he remains independent; the Nationalist cause is financed by Spanish money, and when that cause is won Spain will emerge poor indeed, and sadly ravaged, but in possession of her own territory — and her own soul.

THE CASE FOR THE GOVERNMENT

BY JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES

I

THOSE who traveled through Spain with understanding and knowledge during the first half of 1936 saw everywhere signs of profound restlessness and, among the peasants and workers, of a great hope.

A country where perhaps a million people are too poor ever to taste meat, where those responsible for social culture have failed so disastrously that the majority of the population is illiterate, where mile after mile of potentially fertile land has gone out of cultivation because the mighty landowners cannot and will not use it, where fantastic contrasts between poverty and wealth are notorious — this country had for the first time in generations elected a government pledged to attack the privileged forces responsible.

It was a formidable task. It amounted to a mandate to bring about as soon as possible a process which in England, for example, had taken centuries to complete.

Imagine an English government today facing the problems of the contemporary world without the background of social changes which came from the Reformation, the Puritan Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Reform period, and the Compulsory Education Act. That will give an idea of how stupendous was the task of the Popular Front Government elected in Spain in February 1936. It had to adapt feudalism to the tasks of the twentieth century, and, if possible, do so overnight.

What was this government? It was really not a 'Popular Front Government' at all. It was a Centrist bourgeois government with a programme which Lord Baldwin or Mr. Hoover would regard as conservative. But its chief support lay to the Left, among the awakened masses of town and countryside. It had in its cabinet not a single Socialist, Communist, or Anarchist, but all these had lent it their vote for the time being. On the Right were its bitter enemies, the representatives of three social forces which felt themselves menaced — the feudal landlords, the feudal Army, and the feudal Church.

What chance had such a government of governing? We know now that from the beginning the forces of the Right had determined to sabotage it, although their only justification for doing so, an excuse since reiterated *ad nauseam*, is that they had to forestall, by fair means or foul, an inevitable revolt from the Left. The logic of the situation refutes them.

On the very eve of the tragedy I had a long talk with the Socialist leader, Largo Caballero. 'Will you be forced into revolutionary action?' I asked him.

'Why should we?' he replied. 'From revolution we have nothing to gain and everything to lose. We support the present government and its programme. If it fails, and we think it will, we shall become the government by strictly legal and constitutional succession. Our vote and our strength are growing.'

Nobody can deny the truth of that statement. With a government under their control and with a growing political strength, what possible inducement was there for the Left to kick over the traces? Either the Centrist Government, supported by Left votes, would bring in the necessary minimum of reform, or a Left government would take over by legal means. This makes nonsense of the Franco plea that the military rebellion was to save Spain from a 'Communist' revolution.

Franco enthusiasts have another and an even weaker excuse for the blood bath that they have brought to Spain. They often try to suggest that the government they betrayed was not a legal government at all. It was, they say, a minority government unrepresentative of the country, and it owed its existence to electoral corruption. Consider the implications of such arguments.

American presidents and British governments have often been elected by a minority vote. Does that give their opponents the right to take up arms against them?

Yet the Popular Front Government of February 1936 won the election with its opponents controlling the machinery. Whatever corruption there was must have worked against the Popular Front and not in its favor.

We can sum up this minor point of which so much has been made in the words of John H. Humphreys, the leading English expert on electoral methods: 'The Spanish Government, like the British Government, was duly elected in accordance with the existing law, fair or unfair. . . . The general conclusion on the figures available is that the two main parties or coalitions were very equally supported by the electorate, but that the balance was in favor of the Left. Certainly there was no majority for armed rebellion.'

That those who voted against the Popular Front were not all potential supporters of a military rebellion was

graphically shown by the loyalty to the Government, maintained at such great cost, on the part of the Basque Catholics, whose position in the February elections was at the extreme Right. The martyrdom of Guernica and Bilbao has been their reward for loyalty given to a government, not because it was Leftist, but because it was legal.

The official apology for Franco goes on to say that the Spanish Government was so weak that it had virtually ceased to govern and had given way to chaos; and therefore 'something had to be done.' Why this 'something' had to be the unpatriotic surrender of the countryside to Moorish, Italian, and German invaders is not immediately apparent. Perhaps a more worthy 'something' would have been to stop the deliberate sabotaging of law and order by the parties of the Right.

We may admit that there was disorder in Spain. Extremists on both sides tried to make government unworkable. I was there and saw how it was done. One May morning in Madrid, for example, a rumor went round that the hospitals were full of working-class children suffering from the effects of poisoned candy given them by nuns. Crowds of women attacked the government offices and had to be dispersed with hose pipes.

I asked a Socialist, 'Who is spreading the rumor?'

'Fascists,' he answered, 'trying to stir up disorder.'

I asked a Catholic the same question. 'Anarchists,' he answered, 'trying to stir up disorder.'

Every day fresh stores of arms were found in Fascist houses. Several times in a week I heard young men in the crowded streets cry, 'Long live Fascist Spain!' and run away firing off revolvers. There were churches burned. Troublemakers were certainly everywhere. And the best help that Franco could bring to the harassed legal government was to remove all the forces of law and order from their sworn allegiance.

But it is possible to exaggerate the disorder of Spain in the earlier part of 1936. Priests and nuns could go about unmolested. Under the protection of the Popular Front Government elaborate religious festivals were held without opposition. Most political demonstrations were orderly. On May 1, 1936, I watched the great labor procession march along the Paseo del Prado hundreds of thousands strong. There was not a policeman in sight, and yet order was perfect. Over the heads of the marchers waved banners which said: 'A disciplined proletariat is the terror of Fascism.' Everywhere the Left organizations were striving to maintain order and to prevent the extremists from getting out of hand; and only those who know the ruthlessness with which the defeated reactionary government had attacked the workers and peasants can know how hard a task this was.

Let me give one instance of the spirit in which a Spanish reactionary retaliates against progress when progress is at his mercy. Land hunger is the great problem of Spain, and under the first governments of the Republic a few peasants were given land that had been confiscated from émigré royalists. When the reactionary Gil Robles government came to power, it not only took away the land, but it sent out the Guardia Civil to superintend the wanton hacking up of half-grown crops, which had been to the peasants a symbol of a new and happier era just dawning. To the peasants it meant that they were once more to be tied to a starving soil.

With such hates abroad, of course, there were problems of disorder unsuccessfully tackled by the new government. It was the task of the reactionaries to increase this disorder, just as it was the task of the Left parties to try to control it. The reactionaries succeeded.

II

What was the programme of the legally elected Centrist Government? Can

it be honestly described as one of confiscation, oppression, and intolerance?

First in importance among its tasks was the problem of the land. I have, I believe, read every law of agrarian reform put forward since the Republic. Confiscation was confined to estates of royalists and other enemies of the Republic who had fled. Other landlords had to give over the land they refused to use themselves and to guarantee tenure to peasant proprietors, *in return for a guaranteed rent based on their income-tax returns*. Does this justify armed resistance? We can sum up the land policy of the Republic as the creation, out of large estates, of a class of peasant proprietors. The political significance of such a class is conservative and stabilizing, as southern France has shown the world. There is no excuse for calling the land policy revolutionary in the Communist sense, though it seemed revolutionary enough from the point of view of the feudal landlords.

What was the Government threatening to do to the Church that justified the calling in of Moors to save Christianity? That there could not be peace between a liberal government and the Spanish Church can be plainly shown by quoting a few lines from an authorized Spanish catechism recommended by bishops for general use: —

Q. Is every liberal government hostile to the Church?

A. Evidently, since whoever is not with Christ is against Him.

Q. How do those sin who, with their vote or influence, help the triumph of a candidate hostile to the Church?

A. Usually mortally, and are accomplices in the wicked laws, contrary to the Church, voted by their candidate.

Q. What are liberal principles?

A. National sovereignty so-called, freedom of religious cults, freedom of the press, freedom of instruction, universal morality, and other such.

Q. What consequences result from these?

A. Secular schools, impious periodicals, civil marriage, heretical churches in Catholic

countries, abolition of ecclesiastical immunities, and so forth.

Q. What does the Church teach about these?

A. That they may be tolerated only for as long as they cannot be opposed without creating a worse evil.

It is not surprising that the Church that had so interpreted its political line had ceased to be the Church of the Spanish people and had become the Church of the wealthy classes. I cannot do better than quote from Father Francisco Peiró's book, *El Problema Religiosa-Social de España*, published at the beginning of 1936:—

There are persons of good faith who, influenced by the traditional phrase that Spain is a Catholic nation, refuse to believe in its dechristianization. . . .

Religion has come to appear in the eyes of the toiling masses as the patrimony of one class: the bourgeois. The conception is very simple: on one side the bourgeois, rich and religious; on the other the proletarians, poor and irreligious. . . . It is no exaggeration to insist that the toiling masses have abandoned the Church because they have come to consider it the enemy of their aspirations. The religious crisis is part and parcel of the social crisis.

Father Peiró goes on to ask the cause of this apostasy. He ridicules the people who say that it is due to Communist and Anarchist agitators. It is childish, he says, to suppose that the masses are agitated for the mere pleasure of being agitated. For agitators to succeed there must be just grievances; and the hostility to the Church among Spanish workers is due to their not having obtained from the Church what they justly demanded, protection from social injustice.

Father Peiró shows by statistics that only a fraction, often less than 10 per cent, of the proletariat and peasantry still comply with the doctrinal duties of confession, church attendance, and death with the Church sacraments. Now the Centrist Spanish Government, supported by the classes who thus felt themselves deserted by the Church, had a straight-

forward programme with regard to religion — namely, to regulate the relationship of Church and State along the same sort of principles as have existed for generations in England or America. It was determined to disassociate education and clericalism, to maintain precisely those liberal institutions condemned in the catechism quoted, and to curb the political activity of religious orders and of the hierarchy.

It was because of this programme, and not because Anarchists (or sometimes Fascist agents provocateurs) burned down churches, that the Clerical forces aided Franco and applauded the coming of the Moors and German enthusiasts for Christianity.

We can quote that voice crying in the wilderness, Prebendary Carles Cardó, canon of Barcelona, who wrote in March 1936 an article in the Catalan Catholic review, *La Paraula Cristiana*, in which he explained from the Catholic point of view why the Catholic party had been so completely defeated in the February elections. He gives example after example of the appalling social injustice of the Gil Robles-Lerroux government during its two years of rule, and puts thus the dilemma of any true Spanish Catholic who has a feeling for social justice: 'Christ in our country is cut in two: the Right parties have His Truth; the Left parties have His Justice. Truth without Justice is tyranny; Justice without Truth is Anarchy.' If anarchy came to Spain when the forces responsible for law and order deserted, the blame lies with those parties who were content with using the tyranny which comes from 'Truth without Justice.'

III

Why were the Centrist Government and its Left supporters doomed to the enmity, not merely of the feudal landlords and the feudal Church, but of the military caste? Because it was their programme to change the relationship

between the military and the State into one somewhat more like that which we insist upon in England or America. The time was gone when the people of Spain would tolerate a Prætorian Guard holding the fate of government in its hands. The Popular Front Government knew that the majority of the officer class was not only hostile to it but hostile to the Republic, and it took steps to build up an armed force, a Republican Guard on whose loyalty it could rely. This meant the doom of militarist domination. It is not surprising that the officer class resented this, but it is surprising that Englishmen and Americans should be found to support that class in Spain when it rose disloyally against an adjustment which our ancestors achieved for us, and which we would defend to the last in our own countries.

That is the case for the Spanish Government as it stood in July 1936 — a legally elected, democratic government trying against great odds to institute the type of social-economic reform that has been part of our birthright in England or America for centuries; faced, moreover, by three threatened privileged groups determined to make its position untenable. Strong as the case was then, after the events of the last eighteen months it is immeasurably stronger.

Franco and his supporters never had a *de jure* case; by illegal rebellion they threw all their hopes into creating one *de facto*. And they have signally failed. The Spanish Government may still lose, but Franco can never win. The alternatives to-day are a Spanish victory or an Italian-German victory.

We cannot hope to understand the present position unless we accept the fundamental fact that what Franco let loose on Spain was ruthless class war. On one side were the people, on the other the privileged classes; the geographical boundary is meaningless and misleading. The workers and peasants of Badajoz or Seville were just as Leftist as those of Valencia or Madrid; the privileged

classes of Barcelona were just as Fascist as those of Zaragoza. That is why a period of chaos and atrocities followed. The extreme Anarchists murdered the Fascists in their power in Barcelona, the equally fanatical Carlists and Falangists murdered anyone associated with the Popular Front or with trades-unionism in their territory.

If anyone still believes that only Anarchists murder, I commend to him Mr. Lawrence Fernsworth's report to the *New York Times* on January 22, 1938, on what was found to have happened in Teruel when its remaining population was rescued from the rebels by the Government. According to him, three thousand Left sympathizers were found to have been murdered by Franco. In passing, one may observe that while the Anarchists in Barcelona killed quietly at night, the Franco forces decorated the main square of Teruel and killed the workers and peasants and their liberal supporters in the best tradition of fiesta and *auto-da-fé*, to the sound of music and applause.

Now atrocities prove nothing in themselves. History neither punishes nor condemns cruelty. But two things are important in estimating the Spanish Government's case in the light of what we now know about Spanish atrocities. First, in order to achieve the 'tranquility' in his territory which so impresses a certain type of observer, Franco had to complete his scheme of saving Christianity by importing Moors with an even more curious one of saving capitalism by liquidating the working class. It is not surprising that those who remain 'go about their business as if nothing had happened,' or that they raise their arms in the Fascist salute on all observed occasions. The remaining Fascists in Barcelona do their best to be unobserved, and doubtless raise their fists in the Popular Front salute. But by the very fact that he has still to impose himself by terror, Franco loses all claim to represent the people of Spain. The Government, on

the other hand, not only does not rule by terror, but has been able to put those responsible for the early days of terror under lock and key. Whereas the men who murdered at Teruel continue in power until defeated by the Government forces, the men who murdered in Barcelona are receiving their due punishment.

Add to this one more indisputable fact. There are very few refugees into Franco's territory — a few hundreds of the privileged classes, and no more. But in Government territory, in spite of the greater scarcity and danger, there are a million and a half refugees who escaped by any means in their power, at the first opportunity, from Franco's territory or from towns threatened by his early advances. There never has been a stranger example of mass departure at the coming of a 'deliverer' than when the rebels captured Málaga, Bilbao, Santander, Gijón. Scarcely anyone waited willingly to thank Franco.

The truth about atrocities and the truth about refugees alike point to one irrefutable fact: the Spanish Government has made good its claim to represent the overwhelming mass of the people of Spain, for the illegal military rebellion has turned into a Spanish War of Independence against the foreign invaders called in by those classes who saw their privileges threatened.

The case for the Spanish Government becomes stronger every day from another angle. There was a time when, thanks to the disloyalty of most of the Army and the Guardia Civil, foreign aid was needed to help defend a defenseless people. In November 1936, Madrid was saved by the International Brigade. To-day the Government could do without the few thousand foreigners still offering themselves, as they believe, as allies for hard-pressed democracy. Out of the chaos has been created a disciplined, trained People's Army capable of withstanding the international forces opposed to it. If

Mussolini withdrew his 120,000 troops (in fairness we may say that Mussolini admits only 40,000 breaches of non-intervention in Spain), and if Germany stopped sending technicians for two months' courses in modern warfare with bleeding Spain as a convenient target, the Spaniards could finish their war in a very short time.

I think we may say that the historical value of the Franco rebellion has been to accelerate the social changes which it was intended to prevent. In their struggles the Spanish people have learned political lessons that might have taken years to learn in more peaceful times. Feudalism is liquidated; and that does not mean merely its manifestations among the privileged classes. One of the most important results of feudalism in Spain was the powerful Anarchist movement, and so long as the protest from the Left took the traditional form of Anarchism there was little likelihood of progress. But after a brief period when Anarchism was in the ascendant it has rapidly declined, and there is far less likelihood of an Anarchist revolution now than ever in Spain's history. And so, when once more peace is restored and the restless legions return to Italy and Germany, the liberal Government of Spain will find itself supported by a Left far better educated politically than before and less easily made to play into the hands of whatever reactionaries may still remain.

But will the Spanish Government win? That depends on a hundred imponderable factors, all of them outside Spain itself. The fate of Spain is tangled up with that of China, of France, of Czechoslovakia, of us all. We may still have to look back in a world purged of democracy and realize that our undoing came when we refused to support a Spanish Government which was ruined because it tried to bring to Spain those conceptions of political and social welfare we accept as commonplaces in our own lands.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

MORE THAN TO READ, MORE THAN TO HOLD

'Yes,' said my friend, 'I think it would be delicious to have a house made of books — old books, big books, small books, brightly colored books; books laid up like bricks into solid walls. And such a house would be durable, too, if properly shellacked against moisture. For a book is really a stout article. Did you ever try to burn one? Well, a book is really an almost indestructible piece of matter, and I love to dream of having a house made of books.'

'Think of it — the knowledge, the poetry, the recorded lives of a thousand men stacked up to give shelter not only against the elements, but stormy spiritual weather as well! I tell you, that would be a kind of cave worth having! Let the poets be built into the north end of the house for greatest warmth, for, of all men, they are most able to bear winter and rough weather; and the heat of their passions would give a constant glow of warmth to that sunless wall. Let the philosophers and historians occupy the western end of the building, for they are mellow, like the sunset, and they gaze back on the day that has been. Let fairy tales and tales of romance hold fort on the east, for the dawn ever holds up the infinite rose of possibility even in the face of drab improbability. Duller books, weaker books, books of fact and science, books which disprove themselves, books subject to dry rot — let these form the south wall so that if it cracks it will not greatly matter. Yes! I do think it would be glorious to live in a house made of books!'

We sat in an isolated pasture that had once been 'sugar-maple bush.' Old, decaying stumps of maple trees stood about. The evening was forming and collecting its colors into a great mass of condensed beauty on the western sky.

'It would seem,' I answered, 'that you actually desire to get inside of books. I agree that books are very fit to serve other than reading purposes. I have used them for ladders, weights, files, wall-hole hiders, and

so forth, but I have n't thought much about using them to build a house. I grant that a house made of books would not cost much. Certainly they would not cost more than good clay bricks. Why don't you hire a truck and begin collecting old books at once? I can think of many old farmhouses whose attics keep almost forgotten treasures of old books. Why don't you go mining in gray dust and cobwebs for these? I'm sure that many people would give you their less valued volumes for the asking; others would be glad to sell their books at not more than fifty cents a dozen. Build yourself a house of books and I will gladly try sitting in it. Please do invite me to come when it is finished.

'But as for myself, I doubt if I'll ever be moved to build such a house. I like my own thoughts too well. My belief is that a book is first to be read; after that it is something not to read, but to hold. Don't you remember how our favorite poet in his poem, "Waiting," speaks of the book of song that he takes out in the fields as something not to read, but to hold? For years it has been my habit to carry a book with me for just that purpose. It is my silent companion, and I do not need to read it any more than I need to try to see that thrush back in the deep woods now singing so sweetly.'

The bird was indeed singing as if the whole world were his nest of gladness and joy, and for a while we hushed our talk about books.

Then my companion spoke again: —

'People are very hidebound and head-stiffened. Their skins need stretching, and their heads need pummeling. They learn very slowly. See how long it has taken men to learn that books make good bookcase fillers. They used to think that books were printed primarily to read; now at last they have learned that books are manufactured to fill bookcases as picture frames are manufactured to hold pictures. See how brightly these modern books are covered. A bookcase filled with brightly colored books serves as a tapestry against a blank wall, and nearly everybody realizes this now.'

'Is n't it logical, then, if we are to continue to go stepping ahead in progress, that it is time for books not to be placed *against* walls for decorating purposes, but *inside* walls? Now I propose to start a movement among publishers which will facilitate the manufacture of books of standard size, weight, color, and even contents — books with weather-resisting qualities printed on asbestos, if need be, which may definitely be used for building purposes.

'Wonderful things are being done with food nowadays. Look at our breakfast foods, our cereals — puffed rice, shredded wheat, cornflakes, and so forth. These are miraculous titbits, and I think they are almost as wonderful as natural hailstones, frost crystals, and snowflakes. I'm sure that cornflakes, for instance, could be enlarged and toughened and used for pages of books. Let these be printed with edible, pleasant-tasting ink, so that they might be eaten after they are read.

'Did n't Bacon say that some books are to be digested? Then let us have meals of books! Let us have shelters of books! Let books doubly, trebly satisfy the inner and the outward man! Let us have asbestos books, cornflake books, soy-bean, spaghetti books, and even dried-peach books!

'Ah, the world is doing wonderful things, and I am now waiting for science to invent the building book, the edible book!'

MY LADDERS

INDULGENT readers of the *Atlantic* will recall that not long ago I wrote an account of 'My Fishpond.' I described the beautiful little secluded spot in a woodland hollow in which it lay; I caught, I think, in words something of the autumn glory that fell on it with the falling leaves. I admitted quite frankly that as far as I knew there were no fish in it. But that, I explained, I kept to myself; it made no difference to the expert fishermen, my friends who came on a casual visit to cast a fly at my trout. They were all impressed with the wonderful surroundings, had never seen a trout pond of greater promise, and easily explained, over a friendly drink in my pagoda, the failure of a single day.

I realize now that I never should have published this in the *Atlantic*. The editor and I must have offended some tutelary god of

fishing. Nemesis fell upon me. When the winter broke and the ice went, a great flood of water carried away the dam, and flung it — cement, logs, and all — in a wild confusion of débris down the stream. There it lies now; and above it the pond, drained out flat to a bottom of wet weeds and old logs and stranded puddles — a feeble stream trickling through.

And the trout? Gone! Washed clean away downstream! I take my fishing friends now out to the place and they explain it all to me till I can see it like a vision — the beautiful trout hurled away in spring flood and foam! My friends estimate them as anything from two miles of trout to five miles.

But do you think those fishermen have lost interest? Not a bit! They are more keen on coming out to look at my pond and give advice about it than they were even in the days when we used, as they recall it, to haul out trout by the puntful.

They explain to me what to do. The miller who ran a little feed mill off the pond is going to rebuild the dam, and my friends tell me to put in ladders and the trout will all come back!

A trout, it seems, will climb a ladder! I can hardly believe it, but they all tell me that. In fact, I have learned to say nothing, just to look withal disconsolate till the visiting expert says, 'Have you thought of ladders?' And then I act the part of a man rescued from despair. They say it will take about three ladders of five feet each. How a trout climbs a ladder, I don't know; it must be difficult for it to get hold of the rungs. But a man said that in Scotland he has seen a trout climb twenty feet. It appears that if you go out in the autumn you can lie on the bank of the dam and watch the trout splashing and climbing in the foam. Quite a lot of my friends are coming up here next autumn just to see them climb. And even if it is out of season, they may throw a hook at them!

Fishermen, in other words, are just unbeatable. Cut them off from fish and they are just as happy over 'ladders.' So we sit now in my little pagoda, and someone says, 'Talking about ladders, I must tell you — whoa! Whoa! Not too big a one!' . . . and away we go, floating off on the Ladders of Imagination.

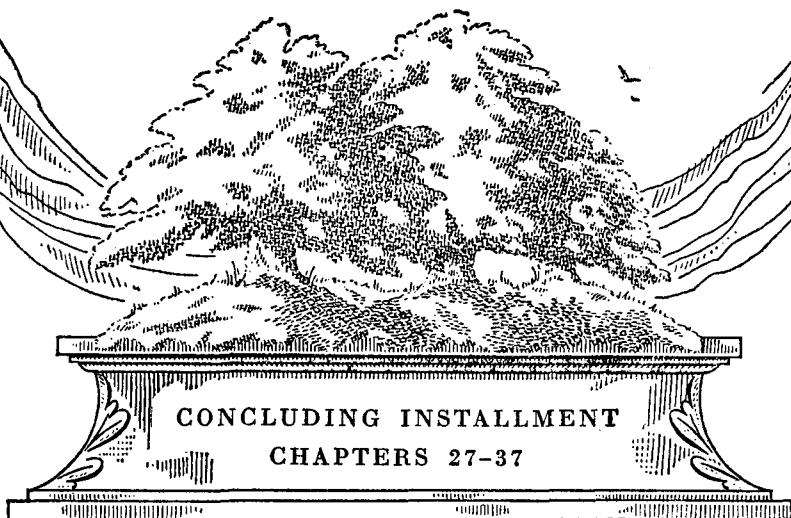
STEPHEN LEACOCK

The Atlantic Serial

A

PRAIRIE
GROVE

BY
DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE



Previous Chapters of 'A Prairie Grove'

IN the early chapters of this book Donald Culross Peattie has traced the story of a prairie grove in Illinois from the time of the glaciers. Remembering for the trees and the great grass province and all the wild creatures that lived in and upon them, he has re-created the drama of the beasts — the wolf, cougar, lynx, and buffalo — that hunted and were hunted by others of their kind and by the Indians. The Indians in turn were startled, hunted, and robbed by the traders and the *coureurs de bois*, innocently or not so innocently aided by priests and explorers.

Among these dispossessors was Robert Du Gay, restless, ambitious, and practical, who came up the Kilimick with his *coureurs* to make alliance with Nikanapi, chief of an Illinois tribe. With him came two priests: Father Pierre Prud'homme, who got into trouble with the Indian medicine man and was sent off by Du Gay to evangelize the wild Sioux — to return seven years later, mad, but faithful to his priesthood; and Father Gabriel Forrester, who was to die of dysentery, but not before his stoicism, his brotherly love, and his vision won him the devotion and respect of the Indians.

Du Gay, fortified by the arrival of his faithful lieutenant, Rafael Pons, dealt shrewdly with the Indians, forestalling a dangerous conspiracy between the Illinois and the English-bribed Miamis. After building a fort he set off on an expedition to destroy the claims of Spain upon the lower Mississippi. While so engaged he was murdered by his own men; his concept of the new empire as a source and storehouse of raw materials, like the dreams of Indians and beasts, failed and faded — a false dawn anticipating by two centuries the conquest of the prairies by the white man.

For the real conquerors of the prairie were the 'come-outers,' the pioneers. Typical of the people who broke the tough prairie and made it into farms was the family of Asa Goodner, from New England — Asa, to whom good stock, whether in a family or in apple trees, was a first principle; Mary Tramble, his wife, delicate, perceptive, graceful, and orderly; Amasa, the oldest son; Patience, the model daughter, housekeeper, and cook; Rhoda, the tender-hearted one; Delia, who inherited her grandmother's wild Irish blood; Franklin, the shrewd materialist; Timothy, the young naturalist; Sybil, the imaginative eleven-year-old; Nancy and John Paul, the twins; and the vigorous old grandfather, Amoy.

In the 1820's they built their house in the prairie grove, befriended by Jean Kiercereau, the half-breed, and by Chance Randelman, a hunter who knew the arts of the frontier and the wild freedom of the frontiersman. That he was to be disturbed and disturbing in his relationship to the women of the family both he and Mrs. Goodner perceived at once. And so, in a different way, did Rhoda, the excitement of her first autumn in the wildly beautiful prairies stirring the secret excitement in her heart. . . .

Now with each twelve months of the Atlantic
THREE GREAT BOOKS OF THE YEAR



A PRAIRIE GROVE

BY DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE

CHAPTER XXVII

FRANKLIN came back from Chicago with ideas. The town was a mudhole, and full of riffraff, but there was money in it. It had a future, perhaps not as great as that of St. Louis, but shrewd men saw it already. Franklin, though he had the least interesting mind in the family, was witness, through a long life, of the city's giant growth; the family to this day remembers scraps of his tales about its beginnings. And I am remembering for them the night when Franklin got home, a changed son and brother, his pockets and heart stuffed with secrets, some of which he told them.

He prepared them first by wonder tales of Chicago. Besides the officers at the fort, some of them with families, the town was aswarm with peddlers and grog sellers and sharpers. At the mere rumor of a canal from Lake Michigan to the Illinois, land fever had infected the whole place, and men in its delirium were buying lots for which they would never have to pay because they would sell them to-morrow at a profit.

Everybody was pursuing claims. There were claims on the government and claims against the Indians. The Indian agents were charged with cheating their wards, and everybody was frantic to

get into the Indian agents' boots. The bounty on wolves had resulted in the importation of wolf hides from Canada; at the same time there were men who were trying to get the government to pay them for the pigs that the wolves had eaten, so they did not want the wolves killed at all.

Franklin had seen New York financiers there, their gray beaver hats stuffed full of promissory notes, mortgages, and summonses. There were hunters from beyond the Missouri, in their skins and beards like Robinson Crusoe's; there were horse dealers and horse stealers — nearly identical professions, Franklin opined. In the mud, in the smells of pigs and horses, in the rank, fresh-water odor of the lake, much trade and more opportunity were abroad. There were profit taking and cheating going on all day without apparently the compensatory action of natural or moral laws; a big profit did not mean that someone else had to take a loss, and transgression of the commandments was not punished, in this place without a God. At night the people who tried to sleep in the handful of crowded log houses, in the fort, in the wagons, even on the beach, were kept awake by the dismal celebra-

tions of the Indians; they howled and sang and powwowed over their liquor in worse than savagery.

Now Franklin brought out his first secret and proposal. He was a young man of initiative. Unused money was a crime, in his view of it, and, like all moralists, he was ready to take on other people's welfare. So he had taken seventy-five dollars of the family cash, to buy an option on five acres at the mouth of the Chicago River. I can hear the family conference on Franklin's astounding coup. His transgression of their moral law was so obvious that they did not need to point it out to him, and at first they were dumb with astonishment, for they had their first revelation of Franklin's own come-outrance. They were unacquainted with the morality of the banker, which is, except as hemmed in by law, to seize every opportunity at the lowest price, use others' money for their own good, and then honestly pay them their share of the profits.

Old Amoy's voice: 'What's the land good for, Franklin?'

Asa: 'Must be pretty swampy, right at the mouth of the river.'

Franklin's mother: 'Is it the sort of place we could take the girls, my son?'

Amasa protested: 'Seems to me we've just got settled in here.'

To all these objections Franklin's answers were entirely unsatisfactory. The land belonged to rushes and frogs; Franklin had seen things he had hoped his sisters would never hear about, and, most fantastic of all, the idea of purchasing the land was not to put it to any use at all, but only to wait until other men had improved the vicinage and the value inevitably soared.

Amasa toyed for a while with the charm of the problem. 'We could ditch it,' he said. 'Maybe build docks. Or run a ferry.'

Asa said, 'I call it bloodsucking. Why did n't you buy land we could improve, if you had to buy more?'

'Land,' said Amoy, 'is worth what you

can make it yield you. When this Chicago boom is over, the New York investors are going to find that out.'

Franklin argued, but it was like talking to children. He grew sarcastic and lost the tepid alliance of his older brother Amasa. Asa too patently forgave him, and his mother was gently sorry about his mistake. So Franklin stuck the option paper in his new hat, clapped it on his head, and slammed his way out of the log house.

He had to come back for supper, of course, with burrs all over his trousers, and he unfolded then his second secret. He had accepted a commission as an adjuster; in harsher language, this meant that he was going to ride all over the district collecting old bills for the Chicago, St. Louis, and Alton merchants, taking a percentage on the collections.

I can hear the irritated rasp of Asa's chair as he pushed back from the table. The girls' eyes widened at their father's unprecedented outburst.

'Now look here, Franklin, that's not a Goodner way. There are two ways of making money; one is producing it out of the stuff God gave us on earth. The other's the leech's way.'

Franklin flamed back at him. 'It's just the same as what lawyers do, but they charge a lot more for it.'

'It takes more brains to be a lawyer,' murmured Amasa. 'All you need for bill collecting is a hard heart.'

'I say it's a leech's way.' This is their father's ringing voice. 'It is n't that I don't believe in a man's paying his honest debts, but these people out here have got a mighty heavy load to carry. We'll all have to haul it pulling together. The West has got its back teeth mortgaged to the East, and we can't sell them what we've got, with the cost of transport over the mountains what it comes to. There's no door for us but the New Orleans merchants, and they know it.'

'There will be,' said Franklin, 'when you can sail from the Illinois to New York Harbor by the lakes and canals.'

So they got back to the five acres of swamp water at the mouth of the Chicago River. When the dispute was all over, the option was to be allowed to die, and the seventy-five dollars written down to loss, without fixing blame.

Franklin became an adjuster and removed to Chicago. That town was going to grow; women would have to come, bringing with them the need for luxury that made business flower. Jogging in to Chicago, the hocks of Washington spattered high with November mud, the wholly deciduous woods bare and the prairies rusty bleak, Franklin saw before his persuaded vision the stone house, the deep stair carpet, the small comb on the boudoir table with the fluff of gold in it.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Chance Randelman kept coming to the house. He did not know when he had hunted this kind of game in the bosom of a family, and he did not know for certain which girl he was courting. Suddenly Patience looked scarcely older than her sisters; the stove gave her face a pretty flush; she had pretty fingers, and her seriousness had a charm that Chance had never before tasted. She explained to him the mysteries of pearl ash, and he attended with mock gravity; the theory of biscuits did not interest him, but her practice of it was perfect, and this Yankee cooking, this domestic altar of a stove, the forgotten decoration of books on a shelf, piety, and so much mature innocence in a girl who would have been shocked by everything about him, had she understood him — these were the quiet room of Patience. He stood no more than in its doorway still, and he could not decide whether it would be more hard fun to come in or to draw the girl out by both her wrists.

He knew a bird when it was restless for departure, and he understood Delia better than her family, to whom she was one of the children. He might have

had a cruel pleasure in showing her how well he understood her; he could have unmasked her unconcern and, drawing tight the noose of instinct, have made her tremble at herself.

With Rhoda he found himself marching to a tune she seemed to know better than he. She would not meet him one half as often as he wished; he could not say things to her that meant nothing; he had either to advance or to retreat. She had not her older sister's touch of prudery, or Delia's vanity. She had more warmth and more candor than either. Her eyes said, her arms said, Either I am your wife, or you are a stranger. So they quarreled. He got no more kisses, knowing that by one more he would stand revealed as either a husband or a seducer. Her breasts, proud tender twins, promised rest for him and his; all her body spoke to him, saying, I am woman; how much of a man are you? So under her eyes there could be no courting of her sisters, and when they were alone he did not make more than a stormy slow progress with her.

If Patience and Delia had known that Randelman was Rhoda's suitor, they would have stayed out of the way. As it was, they tried to cast their spells in quiet without doing anything for which Mary Tramble could look at them with long intent. Silently that well-born lady combated her visitor. He bought his way into the house with stupendous turkeys, with quail, prairie chicken, venison, and duck, and Asa was always honestly glad for his woodman's advice. Asa trusted the taste and sense of his daughters almost boundlessly; what they were too young to know, his wife would understand for them.

Chance Randelman had family; that is, he had half of a family. The Randelmans were South Carolina, and he took the trouble to explain this to Asa and Mary Tramble. His father had n't wanted to marry as the family saw fit. Asa clapped him kindly on the shoulder; Goodners feel that you can come-out

in your marriage too. But Mary Tramble asked, 'But why did they object?'

Melissa Babb, the bride of Broadus Randelman, had been a Tennessee mountain girl. There is no other record of her. But you can imagine the rest. She was young just one spring; perhaps Broadus first saw her barefoot in a brook, or amidst azaleas in flower. If Chance remembered that she smoked a corn-cob pipe in her old age, he did not tell the Goodners of it.

He had known Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, and southern Illinois, in the slow nomadism of the family; he could just remember when his own house had had books in it. His father had given him fragments of a distant cultivation, so that when he hesitated, perplexed, over the three Goodner daughters, he remembered the casket scene in *The Merchant of Venice*. But he had a presentiment that he was the Prince of Morocco, destined to open the wrong box. For he knew himself. He had every art that a frontiersman needed; he was much less of a simpleton than Asa or Amasa; he was not afraid of anything physical; he was not entangled in sentiment. But the frontier is a thin strip and a shifting one. Guile like Franklin's could get the better of all Chance's wood wisdom; it would drive him out of his woods in the end. And wherever they could, women made the world as they would like to have it. What a woman's trick those caskets were!

Winter came. All November there was no sun. The woods were sad; only the marshes had life in them, for the ducks and the geese were going over. Randelman had Timothy with him in the cattails, and he taught him to shoot flying and to leave the rank-fleshed mergansers alone and go for the delicate teal and the mallards. As he could do nothing with the boy's sisters, Chance felt a craving to put his hand into this young life that women had made soft. He felt the pleasure of initiation when at last he got the youngster to enjoy a

clean shot through the game's heart. He taught him the cunning of traps and gave him a knife for skinning.

Timothy's hand stopped fumbling; his reserve stiffened into confidence. He learned with an application that his teacher had never seen, but there was something growing in the boy for which Chance had no word. He had hardly heard the name of natural science; he did not recognize abstract interest when he met it, and thought it simply idle curiosity. Randelman threw skinned muskrats to his bitch Letty; the boy wanted to dissect them. Chance let him, thinking the lad's morbid interest would soon flag. He found him just delicately teasing out the embryos from a little deer mouse. So that's it, thought the man, and said, 'Want to know about that? Most animals just have them in spring, but mice are at it the year around, if they get the chance. Like people.'

'Know about it already,' said the boy without looking up. 'People are n't my business. Mice are.'

December stormed in on the north wind raiding from Keewatin to the Staked Plains. There were three storms that you could scarcely distinguish, following each other with a long animal wail at the back of their white throats. The first locked up the rivers and devoured the scenery. The second scoured and sculptured the mountains of the first. The third cased the trees in sleet; it cracked tree limbs in its grip and dropped the little ice-freighted kinglets and longspurs dead from its paralyzing grasp.

Only when it was gone and the peace of death glittered marble and graven in the winter solstice did the temperature really begin to fall. The sun came out, but nothing thawed. The beautiful blue dead air lay inert over half the continent. Across crusts like the meaningless floor of the sea the glare made the men look down in pain, as animals will who are hurt by your stare. Nancy and Sybil would come running back sobbing

from the privy. The older girls brought the linen in from the line, stiff and glittering with ice. Even Chance did n't come; the snow was too deep for the roan. Amasa said it was warmer in the byre than the house. But the fire roared, and the whole family around it did not feel crowded; they shared seats, and children on the lap were warming.

The children liked the widespread disaster that was winter, and even the adults could still laugh at it. 'January thaws, you know,' promised Amoy. Patience blew on John Paul's fingers; Timothy sewed on mink skins for his mother with Sybil on his left thigh, her head on his shoulder as she read aloud from her geography. She did not care for geography at all, but she had formed one of the passing unsentimental, unphysical attachments within the family that two Goodners will unexpectedly strike up, they don't know why. All day the three older sisters were given to hugging and comforting each her own chilly upper arms; at night they lay together in their bed in the back room in a mutual happy warmth. In the trundle bed even Sybil and Nancy, who never got on together, slept close as kittens. The boys and Amoy slept in the low loft; Amasa swore when he had to put foot to the floor in the morning. But Timothy had a craving to lie coolly and by himself; he made a pallet on the planks, and the boards under his shoulder blades gave him something he wanted; they said, 'Lie straight, take the hard, walk up-wind, see no murk, look in the crystal.'

In January, when no thaw came, he went to the river and toiled till he got the snow cleared off a patch of ice. Then in his bulky clothes he lay flat and put his hands edgewise to his temples to look deep in the locked water world. Presently, clearing more patches, he found what he was seeking — the tiny silver bubbles from the muskrat's snout were fountaining up to collect beneath the ice as one luminous sphere.

Purified by its passage through the water, the oxygen gleamed there and the animal, swimming with his hind feet and his tail, the forelegs held squirrel-like, rose sleek and gleaming with an eager nose to breathe back his translated breath. Then he saw the man shape dark and sprawled above him, bobbed seal-wise, and shot with empty aching lungs for his deep suckhole in the bank.

The boy stood up and took the bearings by two willows and a naked clump of kinnikinnick, red switches spearing out of the drifts; he could come back here and break the ice and bait his trap. He was beginning to get the feel of something for which he knew no precise terms. He saw, for instance, that the teeth of the beasts could be written down as a specific dental formula, as his mother had learned at the seminary to identify flowers by their stamens and pistils. He had no books, and did not know the titles of any of those he wanted, but he could see species and families clear as he had seen the ribband strands of the eel-grass in the frozen river. His passion to collect was still juvenile enough, but he also wanted to know.

He could n't wait for spring, when the ground would loosen and he could dig open the burrows of all the creatures that in the great horizontal scenery dwell underground. The feel of a small wild beast in the hand made his heart laugh, but then he would keep quiet, calming the vole or the shrew. And these little creatures had languages, but their voices were a whisper; no one seemed to hear them but Timothy. They moved so swiftly on the snow that others thought they had seen the shadow of a blowing leaf, but he always saw where they had dived into their ventholes, and, thrusting the crust and snow away, could overtake them and pocket them.

Living with field mice, skins of woodchucks, and the smell of mink was hard on the rest of the family, but they recognized that Timothy had some business not theirs.

CHAPTER XXIX

That was the winter of the wolves. In this grove then, on the naked sweeps, in all the sprawling county of Crawford, — name for an emptiness, — there was not man's way, but wolf's way. They had the last of their nights then; in a little while they would be rounded up in a hunting circle like their own; they would be shot down; they would die on the coming railroad tracks. There was no quarter for them, and they had to take the lead in their hearts and brains. They went out, scarlet rage and fear going suddenly black. They died with their hunger unfed, with the cubs unborn in the swaying bellies.

But there was a time, when the big cats were gone and the deer grown plentiful, when sheep and fowl and calves were first here to be raided, that the timber wolves and the prairie wolves were king for a decade. In the deeply penetrating disturbance of the old biota, kings fell from their thrones, and one species or another, in those unsettled times, might rise from jackal rank to leadership. But dynasty they could not have; they had their hour, and that was all.

The wolf pack was for the most part a family affair. The hunger would drive one pack upon another's bailiwick. Together the two might flee an agonizing fast; then they would catch a third pack up in their flight from torment. But it was not all running; they only ran when there was something to catch. Else, they ate despair, and would sit about and weep for themselves like Indians.

When a man is hungry, long hungry, he is whipped. Soldiers will beg, wives will sell themselves; mothers will ask strangers to take their children if they will only feed them. But wolf's hunger is a rack torture, and when the prey is flaired there is no begging for it and no price; only running then, mile after mile after mile, endurance on fatigue, craving as a whip, and at the end a desperate

fight. When the kill went down, an hour was lived in an instant; it seemed as though the fangs had had but a morsel and the tongue had barely lapped blood. One buck to a pack made hunger only grow savagely joyous. It was a collective hunger, such as we know nothing about; there is nothing to compare it to but mob anger; to a mob, one victim may not be enough.

Old hunters' wolf stories are colored till they glare with lies. Wolves were not brave; they were not as cunning as the foxes they hunted; they had the weakness as well as the strength of the herd. Indians did not think much of wolves; I have never read an Indian legend or narrative of wolves eating a live man. But they ate a dead one here that winter, twenty miles south of the grove. When what was left was found in spring, he was known by the diamond on his finger bone as a land shark from Wilmington who had turned a hundred and fifteen people out of Brown County in Indiana. But the wind had got him, and the drifts, and then the wolves. The pack caught his horse twelve miles away; it had strayed off the track when the rider dropped from the saddle.

They sprang the traps that winter, which Kiercereau and Timothy set, and stole the bait. Or they found the animals that had got caught there and ate them to the imprisoned paw. The twin John Paul ran in to tell of a skulking dog in the twilight. Patience went out with him to see, and what she saw was six dogs that were wolves. The slam of the door sent them flying.

Then they began to make the nights atrocious. That long plaint, generated deep in the throat, held long in the muzzle, wound through the dreams of the half-breed. He had a shack on the Seignelay, a rickety old structure built by some previous trapper, that it seemed the teeth of the north wind might crunch. The few who had ever looked inside it remembered a den of a home,

with bits of things that he planned vaguely to turn some day to use lying about in dust and rot. The wolves knew his doorstep for its smell of musk and mink glands and squirrel fat, for he sat and cleaned skins there. When he saw their tracks around his place in the morning, he would swear. But now he was dreaming, the moon on his face, his fire almost out. In his dream there were running and pursuit and an aboriginal terror.

Chance Randelman woke up and heard what he called the singing. He had a cabin opposite Catfish Ferry, and, so far as I can place this to-day, it must have been near the mouth of the Kili-mick, where the old Frenchman ran a raft across for the travelers for Chicago. He lived there with Bird, his servant; Bird was a Negro, for Chance was a real Southerner who could not be happy away from a race that he despised. Owning Bird was like having a dog, but a dog who could cook and keep house and clean the mud off your clothes. He supplied the welcome home, the fretful solicitude, and the admiration that a woman gives. Bird was afraid of wolves, afraid of ghosts, afraid of bad luck; he had Chance's superstition for him, so that Chance could reassure himself by mocking the shivering black buck.

The song of the wolves stirred the hunter in Randelman; he lay tingling with unnamed desires. He thought how they spoiled the hunting and hated them hotly. He had once caught a wolf hardly more than a cub, right in the door; he grabbed it by the scruff, got the dog whip off the wall, and gave the rear quarters a long lesson; then he flung the young thief through the door and watched it scud with shamed tail for cover. He never quite knew why he had n't simply drawn his revolver, but he had liked punishing that limb of hell. His traps belonged to him alone, and that wolf knew it now.

He was a bewildered man, although his gun sight was so steady. He lived,

you would have said, like one who knew precisely what he wanted and the short way to getting it. But he was not unimaginative, and he saw the closing of a circle. He had virtues that had been worth life itself in the first stages of pioneering. That was the time when this people, we, these Americans, were cutting a way slow but clean through the hardwood forest and the mountains. That was Boone's age, but the Boone men are sad men now. When there are no savages to slaughter to the glory of the Lord, their virtues sour. Sometimes we have to hang them; sometimes they are only lazy husbands, killing a succession of wives; perhaps the rich ones go to Africa and pretend.

Randelman was young, only twenty-eight that winter; there must have been bloom on him. He had heart to warm and discomfort his selfishness. He had breeding, so that he knew how much of breeding was lacking in him. Where he did not indulge himself, he kept a strict discipline. His first law for himself was liberty; he had never worked in his life, in the sense in which the Yankees meant work, and fences were enough to make him move on. Moving on was in the blood of his kind; they were the ones who went first, but they could never remain where they went. What they did took a courage that only they had, but they did it because it was for them the easiest way out of encroaching responsibility. He and all of them were bewildered people, because they hated the wolves with a Biblical righteousness, yet when the cocks instead of the muzzles cried on midnight, they followed the pack.

He, Chance, would have been over the Rock River and into the Military Tract before this had not the circle been already closing around him. He had not imagined before that there was any circumference that could bind him, but the linked hands of three girls held him fast. He was a seducer, but he had never intentionally harmed any innocent girl or

woman; his had all met him halfway; they expected nothing of him and no better behavior of themselves. They were reckless young animals who had decided to run with the wolves.

But now he heard the damnation and the ever-unsatisfied lust in the pack's voices. He found himself on the other side, and instincts that he had not known he possessed were twined with his own appetites. A door that he could lock on his happiness, a roof wider and holier than this one, a bed made by a white hand — he could have them, for the price of giving his name and losing his identity. He had no illusion that Goodners could be changed; you would have to be one of them under their eyes. He saw how his father had broken with his family; Goodners may live in the South and have other names, and even a marriage may appear illicit to them. He supposed that perhaps his father had looked to them like the weak member of the clan. Which of the girls was the link that you could break?

Mary Tramble crept back to bed from the round of her family and the replenishing of the fire. She got into warmth again, and lay with her cheek serenely on one fine hand, listening to the shuddering misery of the wolf cry. Behind dutifully closed eyes she faced her wolves. She had a literary and a moral mind. She was not imminently nor seriously afraid of fangs; the door was locked, the gun hung over the mantel; she had men about her. It was not wild beasts that she feared. Life has so many dangers in it that you cannot risk trepidation; Mary Tramble Goodner remained calm about her daughters. But she always wanted to slam the door when she let Chance Randelman out of it. She knew too much about women to think that the girls were safe because they slept at home. Woman is never safe from her instincts; when the floodgates of her generosity open she may be swept out of the safest home.

Even what was called a happy life

was stern to woman. Mary herself had felt the irresistible invasion of personality that love brings, and pregnancy, and a single devotion to family. These brought their own rewards, but they cost a round price. Simple women do not count it over; this one was not simple; she had will, she had mentality for which the biology of her career found no employment; at best, it might only be passed on to her children. It flowered also into a delicate realization of life which makes her letters invaluable to me.

Mary Tramble, I see, would never pity her daughters, any more than herself, for being consumed by an honorable destiny. To nourish life was the best *métier*. Waste was another thing, and not waste wholly was the spent hare that, miles away, under that winter moon, felt the jaws close. Flesh and bones had a long moment of agony; then they became wolf. Tenderness and flight were made into speed and hate and sight in the dark.

CHAPTER XXX

At last even the beauty of winter was taken down. The ice casing dropped from the trees; the height and the purity were gone from the sky, and the snow departed from the high places and in dark runnels seeped to the low ones, marsh water lying upon old ice that slowly rotted. This was the moment of the great hunger among the beasts, when the hibernators came forth and found nothing green to eat. Lean, they woke to weather colder than when they had waddled to bed. The carnivores, spent, shedding their winter fur, arrived at the mating season; it was just one new hunger to try short cat and dog tempers. The gray fox — there were no red ones here in those days — the big dog gray fox bit the vixen for her coquetry, but a bite, like one blow, may not be enough. He had to bound half a brush behind her, nipping and panting, till she had had enough punishment. There was no

place on the earth to curl up in comfort, no sun or leaves yet, only cold mud and low sky. The beautiful white tips of the buntings' plumage began to wear off. The winter was old and shabby, and could bring nothing better than an end.

The Goodner children could not be philosophic any longer. The twins complained, and Sybil longed to quarrel with anyone who would challenge her tart tongue. Timothy was sick in his mother's four-poster, and he could not get his brothers to make the rounds of his traps now because fur at this season was of no value. He saw his specimens mauled or rotting, and coughed with continual restlessness. Delia had discovered now that she and Rhoda were rivals — she disregarded Patience; she was angry with Rhoda for her reserve and because the red dress so became her. She knew that she had succeeded in making Chance Randelman long to kiss her, and weather and family conspired to keep her from seeing him alone. The vast, muddy-footed good temper of her father and eldest brother put her out of sorts with all men. But in her adorable young face you could not read the exciting pleasure she found in deceiving everyone and planning their confusion.

Old Amoy took the intensest of enduring heat upon the cap of his knees where he sat in the attitude of a grasshopper up against the fire, cracking nuts. He was the only one of them all not discontented, confined, tired of it, and hungering. How beautiful it was, he thought, to be just deaf enough so that you could n't hear ordinary scratches and thumps! To be able to nap in the day, to think of death without horror, to have earned already the rest of your dinners, to have your children tell you what to do and never tell you what they were going to do, to wonder sometimes what had become of all the threats with which you had been kept from life's longest and saltiest voyages — these made up old age. Surprisingly, it was as

much a mixed drink as youth had been. But Amoy had learned to down his elixirs neat.

Well, it was a long trip from toothlessness to toothlessness, as far as from Amoy, China, to Amoy in Illinois. He had chosen the forks in the road by the random of whim, and he had been intuitive or lucky. Suppose he'd stuck with the seafaring Goodners of Salem! It had sounded like a fine life in those days: travel and money, merchants and pirates, womenfolk and ladyfolk. But if he'd gone sailing, some other man would have got Catherine, and somebody else would have raised the finest merino wool in the United States. He had lent money to these quarter-deck male relatives of his when the great days of New England's maritime empire were over. That fool war with England had pretty well spoiled their fun, and he was glad he'd kept his feet dry. True, wool too had spun out pretty thin when the South discovered cotton. When you have a contest between a fine product and a sleazy one, the fine one loses — lingeringly, disdainfully, and certainly.

Amoy Goodner, holding the upturned flatiron between his knees, smashed another hickory shell with a hammer blow, in a neat anger.

His granddaughter Delia got her magical hair, her long, statue-like hips, and the laughter of her quick-lashed eyes from Catherine O'Brien. But she got her sheer fire-worshipping passions from the now-silvered Amoy.

How he had worshiped the fire through the woman he chose! He had tasted the impish enjoyment of confounding his family beyond Delia's frail powers when he married his Kate. He had let them agonize over the fear that a Goodner had gone over to Rome, without bothering to tell them that Katie laughed at the priests. Poor old Pope, there were so many things in this world he wasn't allowed to find out, so many mistakes he might make, so many oceans he could not stop, that it was no wonder his name

was Innocent. That's what Kate had said, with her hair tickling his ear and his arm under her.

He could just remember the secrecy, the bubbling, the unquestionable right of it. He had forgotten the deep astonishment, the scar of a treacherous weapon that will be left on any lover who stands by woman. The look of her eyes widening and darkening with pain, the spectacle of courage glittering and towering up before you, the final chaos, and the astounding insignificance of the result of it all, tadpole-shaped and uncertain whether to continue this new endeavor of snuffling in air and wailing it out — he had supposed that you could never forget what the bill was like when it came in, but he had forgotten it, serenely; because women forgive you all those debts.

Well, and now he could feel in his bones that spring was beginning again, all the old ruckus. You never could crack the hardest nuts, and he had had enough of coddling this chimney. They did n't know, when he unfolded himself from his hot corner, that Amoy had decided their winter was over. But he knew that you could n't hold times and tempers back, and for his part he would always open the door for them.

So without even his muffler or cap he went and stood in the doorway, bent at the knees, bent at the hips, bent at the shoulders, achieving balance without anywhere being able, any more than an old tree, to hold a limb plumb. He took in a long, wavering breath — suddenly aware that there were not so many of those left to him — and with it in his lungs he tasted what was in it. He saw the haze that was not yet greenness, but only quickness in the high ultimate twigs; he saw ground silver holding a little blue in it. The eaves were dripping and the sun was shining through the drops. He was not so old but that the promise of disturbance and joy was decipherable to him, although not meant for him. It's over, he thought; it's beginning.

He said, 'Let's stand the door open for a while, my dears; the wind's turned south. Well, I guess we wintered it out.'

CHAPTER XXXI

That spring the island grove was for the last time indeed an island, when the waters of the Kilimick and of the Seignelay rose up in their sullen anger and showed their power. The ploughs were to come; the old prairie roots and culms would go, and dutiful cereals, manageable and shallow of their hold, would take their place. The ditches of small farmholdings would leech the land. So the great floods would go. At last even the mud would go, with the falling water table of the land, the drying of the sloughs.

But the old accounts, all the early travelers' tales, tell the story of the might of vernal water. 'For two days, though in the heart of the continent, our wheels were never once out of water.' 'A year ago we had passed this way dryshod in autumn, over the prairie grass blackened with fire; then we were put to it to find a stagnant puddle to drink, a spot big enough to wet a heron's foot. Now we seemed, like Noah, to wander on a watery waste.' 'Our ox carts were five days in making seven miles through the thaw and the muddy sea.' 'An old man having died in the wagons, we could not find a dry place to lay his body until the end of the third day.' 'The trace — you could hardly call it a road — disappeared at the edge of our girdled rise of wooded ground as two ruts in the bitter cold and dirty water. We should never have begun our journey at this season, nor would we have done so but for the land fever and the rumor that all the best sites would be secured from the government before autumn.'

The sign for water is in all the old zodiacs, whether invented for spring beside the Ho or the Tigris. Before there can be growth and flowering, fruit and plenty, there must be water. This is law,

and the writ runs too along the Ohio and the Muskingum, the Wabash and the Seignelay. In the Old World you have the symbol of the Fishes and the Water Carrier. The Ioway called March the Moon of Frogs.

For the frogs racially remember the watery eras, the age of the world marshes, when the club mosses, great and branched as trees, were showering down the spores that laid the coal measures. Now, first, the swamp tree frogs began to pipe, in the night, and the thin eery creaking stole to the ears of Patience, wakeful and remembering a rocky spring sweet with arbutus. *Pip-pip-pip*, they called; *creak*, *crack*, *crick*. The sound upwelled as a choral of unearthly rejoicing in something pre-Adamite and hostile to his sons. *Peep-pee-yeap*; by day the chanting ringed the grove around, and, re-echoing, stretched away to the aqueous and lonely rim of March.

Then was the convocation of amphibians, when the many kinds of salamanders mingled at the vast breeding waters. The spotted species in the icy darkness danced their courting saraband, males and females weaving through the shallows, till the little grinning dragon males set their spermatophoric cones, and the females swept them up in the thin cloacal lips.

The frogs were met, by moonlight, in tremulous liquid; the tiny swamp tree frog's throat swelled out, a pearly sack as great as all his body, to pipe the female to him. The green frogs clasped in the long and cold embrace, and when the roe at last was laid, the milt was cast upon the waters, to come back alive and swarming.

The green frogs plucked their cello strings; the deep note gurgled in the flood. The bass male chuckling of the wood frogs ran under the long snoring croak of the leopards, and over the swamp peepers' choral soared thinly the wail of the hylas, the tree frogs, prophesying rain to come, more rain to fall, and waters still to rise.

The old ice rotted; it rose and melted; it sank and was refrozen, and, continually turning in convective thermostat, it ringed the grove with a saltless arctic sea, where the grebes bobbed and dived, and the mergansers and the loons did turns around the isle.

The killdeer came, complaining, slanting in sideways as if hunting for one dry spot to rest their breasts. The spring clouds flew, darkening drowned meadows to a slaty sea. In the stern light the false groves of cottonwood and aspen rose white-limbed and awed. Then the clouds broke, and the sunlight shafted, wanly, to be drunk deep by the black earth, eager of absorption. Beside the cabin door, like Noah's dove, a single bluebird lighted, earth-scorning, and, sitting on an upright stump, shook out the soft contralto song a moment to the sunlight.

Secretly the rough-shanked willows round the interior sloughs began to limber, with a yellowing of the twigs that snap off at a touch. Delia, walking in the wind with billowing skirts, broke off a switch and whistled it angrily through the air. She was deeply restless, increasingly belligerent to all her family.

Asa Goodner left his books and walked down through the oak openings and over the wild wet sod, to see what had become of his apple seedlings. The little withes looked dead — frozen and drowned and done for. He scratched them with a horny nail, one, and then another, but they were gone — the delicate Greenings, the brave young Winesaps, the Pumpkin-Sweets and Summer Queens and Fall Pippins. Only somehow, he found, the Rambos had survived. Hardy, trusty, lucky, sweet, they had pulled through by a miracle. He remembered where he had planted them, on the higher ground, and how he'd battled with the choking grass and had its roots out all around the Rambo roots. From the first, all the way in the long wagon haul, he'd pampered them. Mary Tramble had opined he thought more of those

Rambos than of his daughters; you'd give them, she had teased, the last cupful of water in a desert.

Well, they had their fill of water now, and with sea-blue Goodner eyes he looked west across the receding waste of mud. Another, in that moment, might have owned himself a beaten man, a fool-hardy adventurer who had lost the race by running at the start too fast and far. He was sick enough with disappointment to lean upon his rigid arm, against an oak bole where the bark algaes were green with the poisonous-looking verdure of spring at the rank. But Asa Goodner was the sort who tries again — the Sisyphus who defeats the stone and the whim of gods. Before him stretched the sodden prairie, waiting to try him with its might, to dull his ploughshare and kill his team. Behind the tender blue of the sky lurked the raw cobalt of August, the drought, and the searing. He had come with axe and fire and share and woman and child. But the untamed continent kept last words to say. It had the buffalo flies to loose upon his cattle, and the ague in its breath. It could send the crows and the pigeons, the prairie chickens and the squirrels, to pick his grain; and, like the ill will of Nikanapi, it packed the scorching west wind in its medicine bag. Frailly erect, looking like a hibernator just emerged, in the baggy last of his winter clothes, Asa Goodner stood and stared down aboriginal enemy with an indomitable dream.

Where the bitterns humped in the impenetrable mud world, amidst the stalks of the dead year's weeds, he saw the tender wheat upthrusting through the future springs. Where his drowned seedlings leaned, he saw the good trees rise, wide-spaced, well pruned, scarlet and crimson globes behind clean leaves. I walk there now, in the vestige of that orchard. Now the apple trees stoop like old women who thrust their hands into the pains and hollows of their backs; they lean upon the props we give them. Yet they refuse old age, except its dig-

nity. Each spring they bear their fragile blow, and some of it — a little still — will ripen to the pome, tart and sprightly at the lips. And this grain, to-day, is high where Asa looked across the miasmal savannah.

Your kingdom, Asa Goodner, your power and your glory. The barn swallows thank you for the barn with the hand-hewn, snuff-brown beams. Swifts thank you for the chimneys that, one after the other, you and your sons raised here. The bluegrass and the orchard grass, the timothy and redtop, dimple and beck in the young wind, clash leaves and whisper *Asa, Asa*.

But the old high grass went when you broke the virgin sod; the marshes went with the ditches. They locked with you in battle, and you aged each other. Your seed is here. And the wild grass is gone.

CHAPTER XXXII

The sound began before the sunrise, when the light was a violet paling over the stars. And it began out on the world's rim and was picked up, relayed, washed on, and boastfully flung back. It came to the sleeping grove and ringed the shagbarks and the burr oaks round. There were booming surges of this sound that came in, first a crest and then a just discernible trough of silence, closed by another wave.

Some who can remember still how the prairie chicken used to boom have called it blowing, and some, crowing. Others say he tooted, cooed, whistled 'between the call of a bobwhite and the hoarse blowing of the nighthawk.' Most of the old accounts agree that it rang out, in the rising pitch of *do, re, mi*, as 'boom-ah-boom.' But Bird, the Negro, claimed they 'hollered' *Ole-Mull-Doom*.

Ole-Mull-Doom — the challenge thudded, and the bird upon the last tuft of the young springing grass at the edge of the grove rose up and replied to it, swelling out the enormous orange sacs in his throat in answer. He lifted wings

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halfway, like a Frenchman shrugging to his elbows, to his fingertips. But this was the opening gesture of a combat dance. Now male pride erected the stiff tail brush till the excited white feathers showed like the cottontail's scut or the snowy hairs on the deer's rump. And male rage lowered the bird's head, where the neck tufts shot up, black and white and conspicuous as a second tail. Between this gorgeous featherwork the throat sacs bulged like painted war drums, crowing the retort to all other males who had the insolence to live. The tympanum resonated till the furious whoop ran rippling with the greater, the composite wave, toward the shores of dawn.

Mirror image of the cockbird's rage, another bird upon another tuft faced east to the first bird's west and looked, no less, a creature of two tails and a furious drum that bounded about on feathered legs. First bird with a rolling gait stamped his knoll till it gave off a dull subthunder to the anger of the living drum. And second bird did likewise. First bird sprang clear of the knoll, in an ecstasy of annoyance, performing thereby the third step in the ancient ritualistic dance of which he knew, though he had never practised them before, the figures. He whirled around as he leaped, and came down crest to crest with second bird, who leaped and met his rival at halfway. They whirled about like fencers, backed, and boomed, ran in to close and became a blur. Out of the first swift passage both emerged to boom again, leaving a drift of feathers on the grass.

Five females had come up to watch the sword dance; the dark bright eyes, unblinking, took it in. The crowing held them thrall; the swelling of the painted throats was glory in their sight. The outcome did not, personally, engage them; whichever triumphed, a gaudy tyrant would possess them, meek in the dust. In their ears was nothing, anywhere, from earth to sky, and south to

north, but the booming, filling up the world with the trumpet blast of an instinct that belongs to spring and youth and yet is older than the very senses, older than sight or sound or smell or nerve. Behind the cluster of the hens were other pairs of cockbirds stamping and crowing to attract their notice. And beyond these, far as a chicken could run or heavily flutter in a day, darted and flirted the gross minuet, and the war cries were repeated to the end of timeless morning and the receding rim of the prairie mirror.

On earth between two dancing rivals moved something which was not of earth, which hung threadlessly in the lightening sky. It moved without sound, and the hawk was directly over them. The crowing throttled in the swollen throats, the gorgeous sacs collapsed, and dull feathers instantly closed over them; the crests drooped, the proud tails were dejected with the counter-instinct of terror; the legs sank and the whole form squattered into the prairie duns and grays and bronzes which the plumage aped to deception. The hawk tilted by, but swirled back on the first astonished cock in a banked glide, and had her talons in his tail before he could scutter. The ground bird flapped and clawed, leaving a welter of his feathers on the earth he loved. But once she got him in the air, the she-hawk was mistress, and her beak was law. Yet this savage deed was brief, and lost in the mating combats that were their own kind of savagery. The sound of death went up unheard for the booming.

Boom-ah-boom — the sun was up. The sun, renewing in the year, was coming to his lordly realm. The tender grass was shooting, sweet grass that the Indian girls once wove in baskets, holy grass with the odor of a woman's hair, which is the first to bloom, gleaming bronze in the young morning with its anthers dangling on the day. Young day, young steppe, life old and young at once — they were all met here, by an-



17 Billions for Government

IT IS costing the American people more than 17 billion dollars a year to have themselves governed. This total—representing the cost of federal, state, county and municipal government—is equivalent to 25 cents out of every dollar of national income.

Who pays this bill? It cannot be paid by wealthy people alone, because there are not enough of them. If all people with net taxable incomes of \$5,000 or more for 1935 had been compelled to turn over to the government all their income in excess of \$5,000, the sum collected would pay only about 1/5 of the present annual cost of government. Thus the great bulk of the tax bill must be paid by the small wage earner. He pays it in the form of "hidden taxes," which fall on poor and rich alike, and are a part of the cost of virtually everything that everyone buys

—food, clothing, shelter—all the necessities as well as all the luxuries. These "hidden taxes" are estimated to account for 70% of the total tax revenue.

But everyone, rich or poor, can pay his taxes, whether direct or hidden, only out of income that has its source in private business. For income taxes, real estate taxes, sales taxes and all other taxes paid by individuals come out of salaries, wages, or other income received in private business endeavors.

Without private business the people would have no income with which to pay taxes. Whatever hurts business hurts all of the country's 130,000,000 people, and jeopardizes the national income from which all costs of government itself must finally be met. No business—no income. No income—no taxes. No taxes—no government.

As bankers for commercial and industrial enterprises, it is part of our responsibility to contribute something to a better understanding of the facts about private business.

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nual appointment; and met, unknowing, this season for their last in their old perfection — the habitat unique of ponderous sod and almost flightless and magnificently polygamous birds, of the wild grain and the locust hordes and the sunflower seeds that were the prairie chickens' fare.

In the old biota, the prairie picture, do not look for the framed composition; the prairie scene with its triumphant horizontal bursts frames apart. Every way it suggests infinity — the bottomless loam, the bottomless blue zenith, the unfixable horizon, and the returning circle. Do not ask of prairie Nature that it shall be pretty, for it is male. It had a shaggy hide and a hoarse voice. It had pride, but was not appealing; it never, like a dainty scene, begged you to spare it, and it did not spare the seed of its own loins. Ungovernably its climate flung from drought to flood and back; it mated its children with a propulsive palm. It had an Indian's penchant for the fat, the *gras* — the tons of the wild grain, the mountains of buffalo steak, that are gone. But the prairie chicken, the pinnated grouse, was here still in the childhood of men and women that I have questioned.

And of all the bird families that ever surrendered the sky for a life of gorging on earth's prodigal table, the grouse and all their kind best merit the thick and carnal name of fowl. Heavy with meat upon their breasts, slow to take off on wings evolving to disuse, amorous as Turks, proliferous and sporting, they tempt the carnivore in man, as they tempt it in the dog and falcon. With their noisy venery they furnish him an outlet for a pent-up laugh. In their turkey posturings and struts, their cock-birds satirize a man, and the scurrying hens make women silly.

So Chance Randelman, riding out that morning across the drying grass, riding the marches of Illinois from sunup to the grove, had no mercy on the chickens. He would shoot them down in spring as

gladly as in autumn; they were fatter, to be sure, in fall, but they were so brassy and so game when in the lists of love that he 'liked fine,' as Bird would have said, to pluck them at the red flowering.

He thought sincerely that he loved the quarry that he struck. He had the hunter's philosophy of kill — that a gallant victim earns the honor of a clean, short death. No hawk tore the body, no coyote jaws enjoyed the dying struggles. Instead, the bullet dealt a blow, neat, almost abstract. An accurate intelligence in the brain of a centaur hunter sent the quarry a death without time — not even time to fear. Man and horse, rifle, bird dog, and lusty bird — they made one whole, for Chance, a perfect synchronization of instincts, skills, purposes, and worths. Mounted, he was no longer a frontiersman behind the frontier, a man with half of good blood, a lover whose best boast would be that he had never harmed a girl good enough to marry. On the mare's back he felt, as he looked, twice as tall as any Goodner. Letty, the retriever, trotted at his stirrup, adoring as a daughter. He felt extended by his gun, as education extends one man or money another. Armed, he was the king of beasts, in this morning.

He loved a dead bird in the hand, and his lover's hand went naturally to the heavy breast. As he rode he raised a dead brace up, lashed together by the stiff legs, and, lifting them to the level of his eyes, he gave each bird upon its wind-stirred feathers just a light salute of his lips, while he made the mockery of a smacking sound, homage to beauty of a sort. Then he swung the game out and up toward the sun, with a gay and military gesture. In his way, perhaps, he thanked some Master of Life for these lives, and for his mastery of them.

CHAPTER XXXIII

If Chance had been there when Asa and Amasa went out to break prairie with a Yankee bar-share plough, he



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would have laughed to see its gar-nosed blade flung out, as fast as the men could set it in, by the proud violated roots. He would never have ploughed the prairie at all, but if he had been there to advise them he would have had them use a Southern jumper plough, for you can make it jump uncompromising snags. It was born of the forest era, among a people who planted between stumps and let it go at that.

If he had been there, Chance would have ridden ahead and shot the turkeys and chickens and the rabbits as they sprang up, routed. But Chance was absent, *at the taming of the virgin prairie*. It was Kiercereau who brought news of him, and a note in Rhoda's hand. Between the lines, wherein Mary Tramble read that her second daughter had been married at New Buffalo, Rhoda was trying to say that Chance had insisted on an elopement. Mary Tramble saw — as Kiercereau saw — that Rhoda was more in love than Chance. And to carry her on pillion away had been his way of showing them that he would fling off the cultivating blade from his very roots.

Rhoda did not say where she was going to live, or when she would come to see them, because she evidently did not know. New Buffalo, they knew from Franklin's disgusted communications, was outstripping Chicago and would, of course, become the zenith city of the Great Lakes. But no one hoped that Chance would keep Rhoda in such comfort. Kiercereau supposed that the young fellow would take her back to his camp on the Kilimick, and there have two slaves instead of one. As the little swart man went away from the Goodners' startled home, he pondered upon the strange ways of maids and men. It seemed to him that they had everything to fear from each other, and that the briefer their necessary encounters, the better. He understood foxes and beavers, muskrats and the river otters, but not why men must be such fools.

Goodners as a rule are willing to talk things out, but never their regrets. On these they are taciturn, and Asa and Amasa, who regarded themselves as the most injured parties, being foremost in responsibility for Rhoda, turned to the prairie with a Biblical anger and took it out upon the refractory sod. A storm was breaking up; blue sky was winning, and the west wind scudded the clouds before it, so that shadow rushed across the grass drenching the sappy brightness with a darker green. The spots of sunshine hounded shadow, leaped the woods and sped across the river and on to the lakes lost in the reeds. The men sweated, and were chilled again when the wind came.

Already sweet grass was in the grain, and the bluestem, the porcupine grass, and the wild rye were shooting. Prairie was late with spring, and when it flowered it did so shyly. It winked with blue-eyed grass and yellow grassflowers, and there were acres and miles of bird-foot violets, with shooting stars, a New World cyclamen, sprung on their tense slim stalks, the shower of blossoms bursting at the top of its trajectory, the petals flaring up and back as if with the wind of descent. Above the silvery carpeting of pussytoes in spring grew little forests of horsetail; they drooped down to the watery hollows in the land, where the wire rushes were just bursting tiny husky flowers. This was the surface of the prairie, a soft fragrant cheek turned to the sun; this was the most passing and innocent vernal aspect, before the coming to full stature, to the war-paint colors of final bloom.

But under the sweetness lurked strength, root linked with root to the horizon. They had the intent, those frail flowers, to keep this undespoiled fertility all to themselves. They locked grips, hugged earth as only the truly native can.

The lark sparrows — they are almost a vanished species now around the grove — went chittering in anger before the

Something for America to think about

THE brilliant part played by the American railroads in building the nation is a story known to every schoolboy.

But how many people realize the part which the railroads continue to play in the nation's welfare?

The vast empire of the west, opened by rail transportation, still lives and thrives by the flow of its crops and manufactured products to a nation-wide market. No other form of transportation could do this job.

Over the country as a whole, the railroads handled 13¼ tons of freight for every man, woman and child in the United States in 1936—and did it so smoothly that few people realized what it would be to have this vital service impaired.

Within the past four years, the cost of railroad operation has skyrocketed, due to increases in wages and taxes and in the prices of fuel and materials.

Revenue has steadily declined, to a point where the railroads receive an average of less than 1¢ for hauling a ton of freight a mile.

Rail service, of course, will continue. But to main-



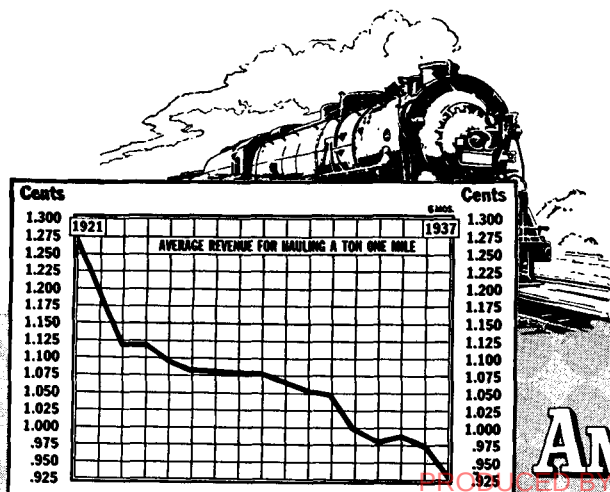
"I consider this among the most important acts of my life; second only to my signing the Declaration of Independence, if even it be second to that." Charles Carroll of Carrollton, at the laying of the "first stone" of the first commercial railroad in the United States, July 4, 1828.

tain its present high level of excellence, the railroads must have additional revenue.

The Interstate Commerce Commission, in its rate decision of October 22, 1937, recognized this situation by such statements as this:

"From the facts of record no other conclusion is possible than that the net earnings of the railroads are now inconsistent...with the conditions necessary for the proper conduct of the public service of railroad transportation by private enterprise."

This is something for America to think about. The record of railroad enterprise in recent years, in face of lean times, amply demonstrates the ability of the railroads to go ahead, if given a fair opportunity to earn a living.



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struggling mules. The ground squirrels at their holes sat up and, with retreat secure, looked on in curiosity until the earth too near them trembled. The rattlers, lords there from unreckoned time, reared back, lashed out, and fled. Amasa could break their backs with a slap of the oxbow whip, but they were as many as a crop of dragon's teeth.

High overhead, floating dots of dusk on the sunny prairie, the hawks kept watching. They had a sharp eye for this profound disturbance of their hunting ground. They shifted uneasily upon air currents, and wheeled away, and came back.

When noon came, the womenfolk saw that Amasa and Asa were already more tired than they had ever looked before. Asa looked really old, and his smile came delayed. Amasa scowled, as though he had met with something he couldn't figure how to beat. When they went back, Delia went with them to look. There were just two short ribbons of the blackest earth she had ever seen, turned over to the sun, and not a stone or a pebble glinting in its midnight.

She stood awhile hugging her arms against the wind and watched them at their grinding slow victory. She saw the reeling of the plough and she heard the whip singing above the shouts of her menfolk; it seemed that the mules were on the side of the obdurate wilderness; their sloping, struggling backs were unwilling. And, woman to her fingertips, she found the whole picture brutal and unnecessary. This way, this costly relentlessness that her father and brother never doubted, she doubted. There were men who came home at night to their white front doors in decent streets, handed their canes to servants, and embraced their wives and daughters, without taint of sweat or grime. There was a man who could bring down all his woman and he might need for their hunger, with one clean shot to the sky. A wild, wind-blown figure, she turned perversely from where her bread would grow.

The ploughshare, resisted, tossed, and dulled, lying weary on its side while the men rested, drove on after a long breath, devouring an aboriginal purity. It went shearing through the juicy roots of the prairie clover, and clove the sunflower tubers through the meat. With every yard it gained, it ended grass empire. It turned the old campus of the buffalo under, and evicted the deer mice and the meadow mice, the voles and the spermophiles. They would come back and fatten in the wheat stubble, but every year now they would be turned out again.

The land fought back. First the off-side mule was lamed with snake bite, then Asa walked off the field with a wrenched shoulder, and the second mule fell forward with a burst heart. But the will behind the plough, collective and racial, could not be broken. Oxen were brought, and another better plough. With a big wheel to run in the furrow and a small one to ride the sod, the plough bit in, Timothy spelling Amasa. The turned turf lay smooth to the light, and the ancient roots began their rot in a deep ferment. This way they broke the prairie's heart, an acre a day at the best.

Behind the plough, the seeds began to fall. It was a sound you could not hear, but the noise of thunder is emptier.

When the wild flags were fading on their fat green ovaries, the sack at Amasa's side was empty and the sun was setting. It was going down in cloudy glory that promised rain. Now let it rain, and the sound upon the roof would sing a triumph. For time out of mind, he thought, it had only rained to make the floods and grow the useless herbs. He gave a last long look of satisfaction at the perfect furrows running to the very mark that he had set. Beyond, against that thunderbird west, was still the fated but unconquered tangle, darkening momentarily, grass horizon, ebbing sea that would not come to flood again.

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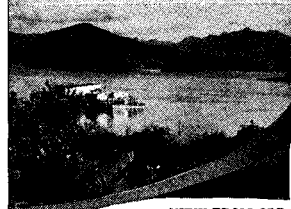
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CHAPTER XXXIV

I see the young wheat spring now, and we have corn and barley, the blue alfalfa and the foamy buckwheat flowers, and oats — how beautiful are oats, when the first wavering ranks of green come spearing bravely in the light! I see the mellow earth turned with mechanical perfection and harrowed; I see the patchwork of the fields, purple clover growing where last year they threshed the spelt. The furrows, with the rhythm of waves or music, follow and curve and vanish. They slice away from the bit of an orchard, leaving a tongue of springy pollinating grass under the trees. The orchard, with its short bent columns and its rudely vaulted low roof, is a rustic chapel in the ploughed productive breadth. And when the wheat is coming up, the blossoms fall, dissolve like foam, are swallowed by the earth, gone like departed breath.

So we see it, Asa Goodner, as you planned it. Or nearly as you planned it; you would not understand everything in the grove to-day. You could not approve it all, and perhaps you would be right. But you understood growing, and you knew that the bloom must go for the pome to come.

We have to remember back, and with an effort realize that this bounty and these lawns and the dry swift roads were not what you looked at. Your apple trees clung then with thin roots to their life, but in the woods the wild crabs with the great frail paddle-shaped petals, spoon-hollowed and set in stars of five, shone from their thorns at the end of every tangled natural alley of the wood perspectives. In the fall the hard fruits tumble, green as young leaves, coated in a soft wax and bringing back the tart perfume that went on the wind last spring.

Then in your day, Asa, there was a boundary where the sown and unsown met. It was a tension point; man's will met with roots' will. Beyond, in the

high grass, the herbage struggled up through its own bronze ruin. The seasons there had their appointed flowering, their rising levels, and shallowly the spring flowers rooted, deep the autumn grasses thrust after the falling water table of the year. In the sown were all foes cleared away, all but the one good species being outlawed with the name of weeds, the seeds spaced, the turned furrow shading to conserve the dew, order beautiful and intolerant brought into primeval thoughtlessness.

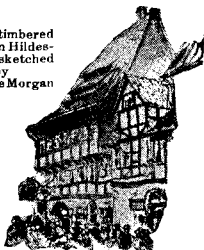
A seed may not be sentient, but it is a thing alive. Only in the spore, the seed, the first embryonic days of any living thing, are so much treasure and future mightily packed. The seeds swelled with the rains, and the thin wary radicles pushed out and, shunning light, thirsted toward veins of moisture. When they found it, they gave way next to the deep geotropism within them, the pull to earth's core. The black loam absorbed the light as no other hue of soil will do, and light and warmth bespoke the seed and called the seed leaf up. The single cotyledon of the cereal gained the air; the first shoot sprang beside it and day by day unpacked from the starchy kernel the stuff of growth stored there by last year's sun. The tide of chlorophyll, green chemical of manufactory, appeared incredibly out of tissue where no greenness had been. Now this system was established, water and salt passing through the rootlet membrane and sent up, dead against gravity, to the leaves. These leaves spread to catch the sunshine. Forever that energy has poured away into black space, and only earth's blowing film of greenery can trap it. Sun in the wheat leaf altered and rebuilt the raw earth matter carried soluble from the root — the first step toward the bread, light kneading starch and sugar, foretelling all the sweetness of the kernel, the whiteness of the loaf.

But all the eye saw was the running emerald of the wheat field, the blowing sheet of growth fire.

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Half-timbered house in Hildesheim, sketched by Wallace Morgan



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The eye of Asa found it good. In his philosophy, life ought to be simple, simple as wheat. Everything could earn its way, harm nothing, and turn out of some account. A man had his way diagramed for him by everything that grew, woman even more plainly. God had tried to make it easy, but men had concocted such a lot of deviltries that they grew all rootless and bootless or let smut into the kernel.

I have seen eyes that I think must have been like Asa's. They are not afraid to look into strong sunlight; it is not that which hurts them, but the miserable things revealed.

When she rode home alone for the first time, Rhoda asked for her father right away. They said he was out looking the wheat over. So he turned and found her coming up beside him.

I suppose they talked as a father and daughter will who are divided now by life and indiscoverable by affection. You can hear her ask, 'How is it coming?' the way we mortals do when we can see perfectly well how it is going. A little time away from him gave her perspective on his years. The battle with the prairie had set the wrinkles deeper and just perceptibly turned the shoulders in. And old men's eyes grow paler, as though life lost its color for them.

All I know for fact about what had happened to Rhoda is that they say she came home and kissed them all and did n't say much. 'When Rhoda was a girl,' belongs to one part of the family stories about her, and everything else to another part. Of course they asked her, 'How's it coming?' But, as with the wheat field, the answer was not spoken, for it could be read. The answer is that change cannot be stayed.

Chance, in the cabin opposite Catfish Ferry, had certain notions of comfort, which for her part his wife meant to alter. To Chance the supreme luxury was to give commands and be obeyed in them. Rhoda was docile; her invasion of his rule was by soft means. His diet,

till she came, was almost all game, garnished with wild rice and laced with golden whiskey; the meats now were never quite so rare as he liked them. He had the prodigality of the forest-born about hearth fires, and her waking and sleeping in the goose-feather bed were wreathed in wood smoke and tobacco smoke. The house was full of furs and skins; there were only three windows to as many rooms, and none of them curtained. But though there was nothing to look in but the owls, Rhoda put up bright-patterned stuff that shut out the stars.

To have kept house in this princely kennel in the ways in which she had been brought up would have necessitated first an eviction, then razing it and building it over. To begin with, Rhoda sent Bird from the kitchen and scrubbed and scolded after him. She thought of the tears of Patience had she been obliged to cook at that crooked and smoky hearth. She thought of Chance and the good she was to this home of his, and was comforted.

To the river weekly now went an astounded but chuckling Bird to perform a washerwoman's needed task. He came to love all Rhoda's clothing like a child's, and laughed to see it blowing alongside Chance's shirts. There had not been a sadiron in the place till Rhoda brought a pair. As she took neat stitches in her clothes, and ripped out Bird's gross sewing from garments of his master's, she wondered where her next dresses were to come from. She understood that there were Chicago and Alton merchants who trusted Chance no end; everybody trusted him, but Rhoda began sharply to wonder when he ever paid up and with what. There was more to be mended here, she saw, than a shirt.

But, loyal in wifehood, she said nothing when she rode for a visit to the house in the clearing that she still thought of as 'back home.' When the light was lengthening, she rode away again, laconic and grown to them disturbing and mys-

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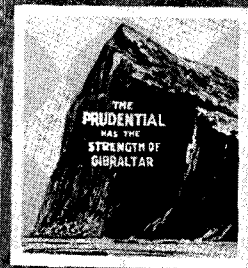


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terious. But they expected still that she would somehow bring Chance back with her to them. They thought then, our people, in that hard beginning that was yet so deceptively abundant, that you could mate with the wilderness, teach it and tame it and keep it living with you still.

CHAPTER XXXV

In the year when the Goodners broke prairie, the public found northern Illinois. Goodners were pioneers, but the public means everybody. It means preachers and lawyers and land sharks, land suckers and idealists and knaves. These people were only a few of them fitted to a wilderness life, and they did not come intending to lead one. They came with a rush to found villages, — though of course they called them cities, — to edit a newspaper before the subscribers got there. And women came. There were girls looking for husbands and schoolteachers looking for schools. They came childless, and pregnant, and nursing, and clucking a covey of children around them, and, like the men, they took one look at the wilderness and thought how they could change it. Whether you blame them or admire them for the domesticity of their souls, you have to remember that they were all propelled between the shoulders by predestinarian forces. Thrust west, or running to outstrip the thrust, they saw and thought and acted as they were accustomed to do.

So would you. You like to think that if you had to live in Basutoland you would still be a good American and never let down decent standards of living or rational thought processes. This is just the way people felt when from the prairie sea they raised the island groves on the horizon, and brought to them a Pennsylvania Dutch mentality, a 'way down Maine' mentality. Herkimer County Shakers, Chester County Quakers, Baltimore Catholics, people who knew Emerson by sight on the

streets of Concord and thought their judgments permanently elevated as a result — all these pietists knew God wanted them to get first into virgin prairie and sow the only good seed.

When a great and seemingly simple event occurs, you usually find that it took the concurrence of many forces to make it possible. The country had just gone through a terrific boom and panic. In July of 1835 it cost an Eastern workingman 21 per cent more to live than in April of 1834. By October 1836, everything he bought cost 64 per cent more. We began to have labor troubles, and a dangerously radical element agitated for the idle existence of a ten-hour day. There were strikes in Philadelphia, Hartford, Boston, Trenton, Washington, Natchez, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Louisville. A perilously popular and left-leaning President was, of course, indirectly responsible for the way that this succulent ham of a country was hurtling to the jaws of Cerberus. The money inflated like a bladder burst in 1837, strikes ended (always a sign of coming woe), and the public could no longer be held back from the westward exodus. Although Henry Clay tried to discourage this draining of cheap labor from the East, by holding Western lands at the high price of a dollar and a quarter per acre, he does not seem to have succeeded when he commanded the billows to stop rolling.

Thousands went west by the Erie Canal; passage was so slow, one old woman has told me with a chuckle, that the children used to get off the canal-boat and run alongside to pick apples in the orchards. The canal had been completed at the expense of the taxpayers of New York, but it was only a hole in their pockets. It still had to be paid for, and everyone who sold his lands and went west cheapened the value of the New York farms. So they got aboard the bandwagon — the farmers who owned those orchards — and when they got out West, whether they felt better or



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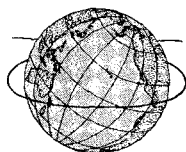
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whether they felt stung, they wrote back home and urged the conservative to come after them.

Advertising looked west; it flooded the distressed industrial cities with persuasions. Margaret Fuller found that God was on the prairie just the same as on Boston Common. Gaspeth the editor of a Chicago paper, 'This town is rapidly filling up with strangers!'

Four hundred and fifty vessels arrived that year in the mouth of Chicago's reedy river; docks built out from the swampy land (the option on which had wrenched free and fluttered from Franklin's hands) received them. In 1836 not a bushel of wheat was exported in northern Illinois; four years later ten thousand bushels would leave those docks in a season. Much of it would go directly to Europe; the golden stream of American wheat drove the European peasant out of business, so he had to come to America.

If you did not come by lake boat, you could go down the Ohio and up to St. Louis by river boat. This craft was considered a floating palace; red carpets, brassbound, climbed the stairs; ladies saw themselves in mirrors wherever they turned, so that the crowd was skillfully exaggerated. The breadth of the river and its height in flood gave you the sense that God had opened a splendid highway for America's manifest destiny.

From St. Louis the stagecoach took you through dust or mud in an aura of mould and horsehide to the edge of frog song, the beginning of thirst, and the land where there is never anything around the corner.

That first summer the Goodners and the prairie grove enter recorded history. I can identify them by three unmistakable references. Ebenezer Wellcomb was a circuit-riding preacher who left his prosy memoirs so squarely in the middle of early bibliography that you have to read them. The Lord enabled this His servant to be right on all occasions, and, as he had a habit of pointing people

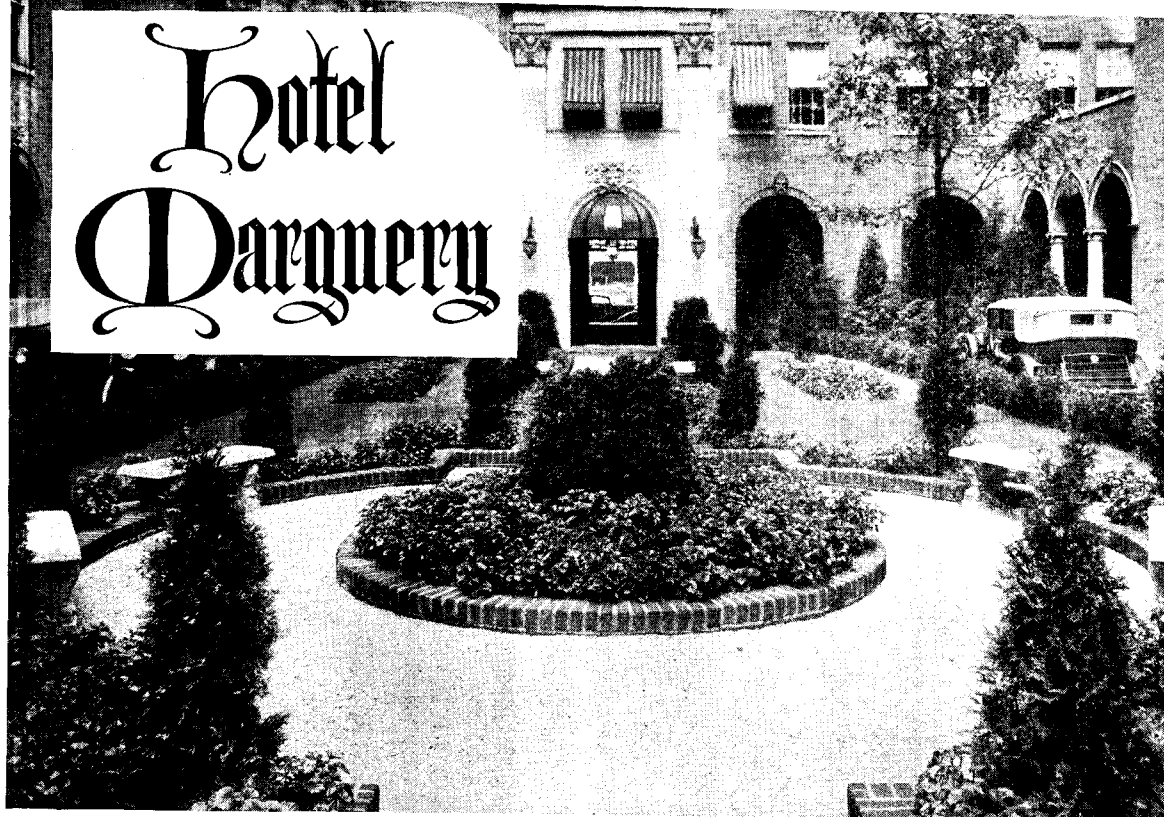
out like an old prophet, he refers to the Goodners by name as a family whose hospitality he enjoyed, but one with a deplorable lack of godliness. As it seemed to him, they were unaware of the perilous situation of their souls. Goodners have souls and know it, but they seldom refer to them. The Reverend Ebenezer Wellcomb turns up in Goodner tradition as a character of comedy, one who distressed and embarrassed them as much as he secretly tickled them.

They are so affable, these Goodners, you would never suspect how hard it is to crack them. They tolerate pontiffs and swamis and Marxists, and they read books about them and have these on their library shelves. It seems hard for a swami to believe that, having heard, they will not follow; he declares that after all they are a shallow people and material. But the truth is that their faith is so firmly rooted in their courage and independence that it is a rocky task to convert them from it.

Ebenezer Wellcomb had arrived, as he tells, exhausted with prairie heat, his horse maddened with buffalo flies, and both of them thirsty as dust. At first he was delighted with the sympathy and solicitude he received, but he was not happy about Asa Goodner's natural religion. Asa loved cherishingly to repeat, 'The groves are God's first temples'; he walked beneath his oaks and felt this with all his heart. But Ebenezer Wellcomb appears to have smelled pantheism, and the next morning he spurred his horse into the gadflies and the shimmering wide heat waves.

Eliza Tuttle's autobiography is a foundation stone in the early history of western Wisconsin. She was an Englishwoman to the end of her days, though she lived sixty years in America. She did not like New York City and almost exhausted her opprobrious adjectives on it; when she saw Chicago, she was very nearly speechless. As she journeyed west in a dearborn, with a husband beginning to shake with ague (she attrib-

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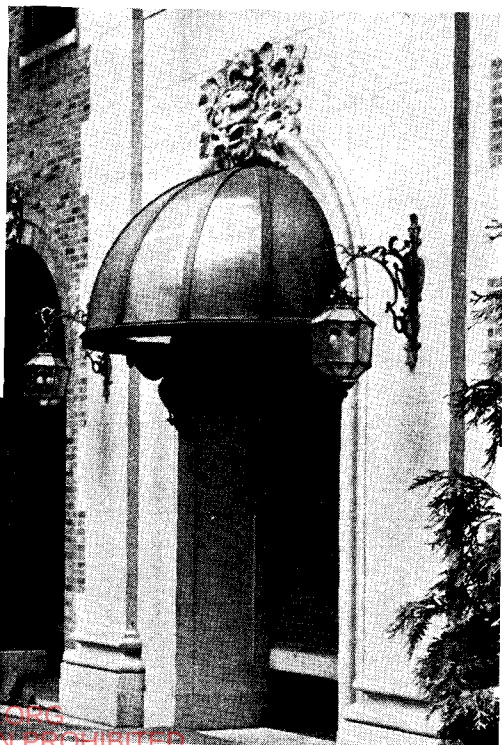
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utes this to the unwholesome humors of Chicago), her situation was really pitiable. She had probably been cheated on the horses; the driver did not in the least know his way, had lost the Galena trace, and dragged the poor woman and her sick husband through sloughs and over grass hummocks for a whole wasted day.

It was almost sunset when a beautiful grove of trees rose out of this desert, and a beckoning plume of smoke betrayed a human habitation. My heart beat fast with hope, but so many had been my disappointments that I could not but reflect upon our melancholy predicament. What manner of the human race awaited us here in the wilderness? Would we again be leeches for our money, treated to rude Yankee contempt, and forced to sup on 'Johnniecake' and fried pork? But we were in no position to select our lodging for the night; unless we preferred to remain on the open prairie, exposed to unwholesome exhalations and serenaded by the dismal raving of the prairie wolves, we should be obliged to shelter beneath the unknown roof there under those trees.

The reader who has thus far followed our chequered fortunes in Yankeeland will judge with what astonishment I found myself made welcome in a house which, although rude, was spotlessly clean and even boasted the cultural attainment of books. These people called themselves 'New Englanders,' and indeed I could find it in my heart to call these good folk germane to mine. My husband was at once given every comfort that the primitive surroundings allowed, and I was so relieved by the sense of home and decency about me that I gave way at last to tears in the arms of the lady of the house.

The Ohmites were a band of Pennsylvania Germans led by Father Georg Ohm, in search of free soil and God's grace. It is not clear why these were not available at home, but either the neighbors frowned or religious leaders lack originality and have all to begin with an hegira. The Ohmites walked the entire distance from southeastern Pennsylvania to the Pecatonica. Only a week from their destination, when they arrived at Goodner's Grove they were a weary

band of the chosen in the world of what they called the Gentiles. Their few wagons containing seeds, bedsteads, sick, and old were allowed by Asa to draw up in the shade of the great oaks, not far from the well.

'The sound of our hymns rising through this grove of trees saluted our salvation and good fortune.' Long did the grove remember them, for when the Ohmites departed they had somehow left behind a legacy of buffalo bugs, emerged from their carpeting and bedding, and if ever I write the entomological history of Goodner's Grove the periodical outbreaks of *Anthrenus scrophulariæ* in attics and horsehair trunks must make a sad item in it. Ploughing tamed the terrible prairie flies; the burrows of their larvæ are cleft and dried. Buffalo bugs have another way with them; they travel our roads and live in our goods and do their work while we forget them.

The trace by usage became a road of sorts, two deepening ruts, a beaten trough that grooved lower as the surrounding grass grew taller. The squeal of the hubs seemed to Asa's family continuous; I am only glad they cannot hear the Sunday flood of traffic on the paved highway, or see the trailers wagging by on summer week-ends.

For now we have to rush at demon speed to get to a place where there is silence enough to shout in. Our elbows are worn with rubbing; we have so many neighbors that we come to ignore all of them. Then, Rhoda reported that the old Frenchman was making twenty trips a day at Catfish Ferry. Chance, the family gathered, was cursing this immigration and threatening to remove, horse, gun, dog, slave, and woman, into the Military Tract beyond the Rock River. At the thought of Rhoda in the country that Black Hawk had so recently harried with the scalping knife, Mary Tramble's head trembled.

For herself, she was growing older, and felt it, and felt the warmth that

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other women brought in their coming. It sustained her to be wiser and sustaining, to hold in her arms and comfort a woman nearly beaten by the loneliness and the space.

Then one day, when the thrush had fallen silent for the summer and the cicadas had begun to run their buzz saw, Burt Millerand drove up to the north end of the island with a paper fresh from the land office, titling him to a tract that marched with Asa's. He and his wife and sister and six children lived that summer in their wagons, as the Goodners had lived the year before. The Goodner children went to play with the young Millerands, and over all their voices rang the axes and the ripping sound of trees falling.

Nothing was different in the log house or under the burr oaks but the feeling of the air; it had neighbors in it. Mary Tramble and Patience enjoyed being able to lend to and advise the new womenfolk. Amasa was filled with agricultural and architectural theory, and when Burt Millerand, a self-confident man, would not listen to him, Amasa gained the ear of Burt's sister Jessie, who attended so well that she obviously meant to be the wife for him.

So root was beginning to link with root; the new seed had fallen. The first crops were rushing up, nourished on an untouched fertility. Corn had been planted after the wheat, and now for the moment the wilderness animals were drawn by the astounding new biological fact of the growing granary. The ground squirrels had never tasted such a banquet; the fox squirrels left the woods for the fields. Rodent teeth gnawed and stripped, and the prairie chickens came like domestic fowl to profit. As the corn ripened, paroquets, tropically green and gaudy yellow and orange, flocked in the field to rasp with hooked bills and talk with raucous self-congratulation as they fed. The Goodners could not keep these pests away; Chance came and helped shoot them from the fields; Delia loaded

his guns and handed them to him as fast as they were emptied — flushed, laughing, and flattering at his prowess. But no losses diminished the paroquets, the prairie chickens, and the squirrels. And yet it appeared that there would be harvest enough for all. In its grand impartial bounty this America, this continent, put her man child and her wilderness offspring each to a flowing breast.

CHAPTER XXXVI

I have before me materials that I gathered with the intention of one day writing a biography of Timothy Goodner. For the records of natural science in the early Midwest are as alluring as they are sparse. We have Audubon and Michaux, and Thomas Say had taken a tentative and somewhat Philadelphian sniff of our air. There are mad Rafinesque collecting the shells at the Falls of the Ohio, and Thomas Nuttall drifting lonely as a curlew along the Great Lakes in a trip of which there is no longer any clear record; and you have Bradbury's *Travels* (a collector's item, that) and Lesueur after fresh-water fishes, and George Engelmann riding the Illinois prairies searching out its marsh flora, and Timothy Goodner, a boy still, but at twenty already a Smithsonian correspondent. Four years later he had left the island grove first for Colorado, and then for California by way of the Isthmus of Panama, and there came an end to the specimens sent from the prairie sloughs and the oak openings to Copenhagen and Berlin and Paris.

I have a letter from Petersburg before me; Ledebour is asking Timothy to collect under authority of the Tsar in Russian America. The passport — my best treasure — stamped with the double eagle of the vanished empire, crackles as I draw it from the tattered envelope. I have the photostat of a communication from Sir Richard Owen, who wants 'some of your American marsupials' to dissect (he is talking, in

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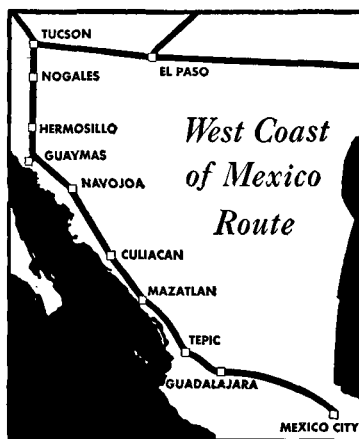
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his way, about opossums). In other letters — copies mostly — Agassiz asks Cope for sturgeon and Cope asks Goodner for them, and Brännich wants gallinule and tern eggs, and skins of rails and phalaropes and Bartramian sandpipers, both sexes to be in full breeding plumage.

But I am less lucky than I seem, for the self-documented portion of Timothy Goodner's life only begins after he had quit the island grove, not again to gather patient testimony of its changing forms. For he returned only as a visitor to a family grown vain of him — who talked with the great at Washington, and was given a room and desk as soon as he entered the rich Philadelphia Academy, and ordained, under seal, to be the naturalist with the Oregon boundary survey.

Their Timothy was the vanished boy who had filled the house with the odor of muskrat, and had brought home the bird's nest roofed over with thistledown out of which, to the horror of Patience, three naked baby mice had squirmed on to her breadboard. But they accepted with an unsurprised pride the Timothy who came to say good-bye to them before he went to Oregon.

While Goodners tolerate and defend the no-account among them, neither are they astonished when they have bred distinction. When in after years they took the theatre tickets she had sent them and went up to Chicago to see Sybil Sorell, they recalled indulgently that she always had been a histrionic child, fond of her mirror and her moods. They spoke of this obliquely, dining at Franklin's elegant home on aristocratic Wabash Avenue, because his wife, a Fleming of West Newton, was morally embarrassed by such a sister-in-law.

Amidst all the worthless letters, the diaries kept by Amasa's daughter who took herself so seriously and was so unimportant, the account books of Asa's horticulturally perfect and financially thin-soled apple business, there is not

a scrap of reminiscence by Timothy Goodner. If he had lived to the age of remembering, he might have set down something about those years when there was only the log cabin in the grove and all the birds were still there. But as it is, I have almost nothing to go on, and I long ago perceived that the biography will never be written.

That would have had to be a severely historical work, in deference to the scientist that Timothy became. But my Timothy of the virgin prairie can never be authenticated, so he must go unsung or be evoked out of what I know of a boy's watching and wondering and finding out.

I can walk in his footsteps, conscious that I am treading zoologically classic ground (though it is a bit like visiting the shore of Piræus hunting for Aristotle the marine biologist). Deep in the woods there are sloughs still left, shrunk to tiny Arals and Chads, for Asa's crack willows have pumped them shallow as he meant them to, and now they overhang the stagnant water and cast green darkness on it. These are frogs' province, and when my footstep shakes the soggy earth they raise the signal of abrupt silence, and the herons understand it and are sailing heavily away above the trees before I get there.

In the years I have known the sloughs that were once greater and were Timothy's, I have listed twenty-six species of marsh bird. But there was a freshwater avifauna in his day that does not return. It moved with the seasons, from the prairies to the pampas and return, with a last crying in the wide interior marshes and a storm of wings when the rails and the plovers and the sandpipers settled on the black sickle that is shore between windy water and whistling grass. On the air then the husky and the plaintive blent, voices first-American, aboriginal, and, it would seem now, alien.

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members seldom seen along the coast, species, like the black rail, that had become rare almost as soon as they became known. I have handled Timothy Goodner's specimens, in an Eastern museum, of the wary old hen rail and three dusky chicks. They lie as skins now, gutted and limp, labeled in Latin in one of the sliding drawers that reach to the ceiling. What was the sky like, Timothy, that day your heart leaped to see them? Did you hate to shoot them, yet know you must? For Bachman and Swainson and Audubon himself would cry aloud with pleasure to see and touch this *Creciscus* that had not been collected since Gmelin named it from Jamaica in 1770.

It is late now, well-nigh too late, for the lost life of the continental heart. Some saw it, briefly, and remember; they tell us that ducks that are driven now to breed in Canada then nested on the Kilimick; the whistling swans went over in a cloud, and the cormorants flapped up the Seignelay in flight formation, black against old sunsets embering into night. Those were the days of the golden plovers pausing to rest and drink in my sloughs, in spring on their way from Patagonia to Ungava; even Timothy never saw them in fall, for they take a different route for their southward journey and from Acadia launch across Atlantic waste without ceasing their wing beats till they see green Guiana rising from the Caribbean.

The bitter salt marshes of the coast had nothing more beautiful than the king rail by the sweet waters, or the Florida gallinules, color of a threatening sky. Over the reed lake where the Ottawa guides had led Du Gay astray, the black terns skimmed swallow-wise above their floating nests, with piercing cries. Wary, graceful, tender, the long-billed curlews followed the whistling leader and came down, with folded wings and legs depending daintily till the marsh grass received and concealed them. The hiding Timothy must have seen them as they emerged, at a mincing run across

the soppy sod to the brown waters' edge and, in little ranks, sipped like communicants of the dark water.

I never see the phalaropes, these days — not in this countryside, at least. But they were here in Timothy's times, and I wonder what he made of their strange ways. I hear that it is the female that wears the brilliant plumage and does the courting, and that she is polyandrous as some island queen. They fear that the Eskimo curlew is extinct now, and the sand-hill crane is going.

The cranes are mentioned in any full account of the prairie days. 'The cranes were always first back when the spring came.' 'They stood almost as tall as a man, but they were hard to see, because they seemed to melt into the prairies and the twilight.' 'They used to keep a sentry while they were feeding on the arrowhead, so you could never get at them.' 'All of us farm boys knew the sand-hill cranes, but we could n't find the eggs no matter how we looked.'

But Timothy found them, and he says, in the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*: —

Often, in the night, when they are migrating, these paludicoline birds proclaim their advent by the trumpeting that seems to shake the air for miles about. When daylight comes, we see them traveling in pairs even so early in the year. Their food at this season consists largely in the hips of the prairie rose, which all sorts of animals as if by common consent first allow the long winters to mollify before they will touch them. The cranes habitually stalk, with some majesty and yet no little ludicrousness, over the bare plains, gathering their manna, but nothing is more difficult than to approach them. With the wariness of old prairie scouts they set sentinels to guard their flocks, and, being mounted on their long legs, they stand almost as high as a man and by their telescopic eyes are enabled to see even farther. I have often, however, watched their mating dance, from a concealment of old cattails and in early spring, just after dawn has broken. Nothing is more singular and yet moving than to see them prancing about, lifting their heads, or suddenly lowering them to the ground, hop-



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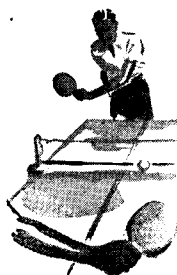
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ping and bouncing, with half-raised wings, crossing and recrossing each others' paths, until, their speed increasing, they become a blur of bouncing balls.

I think, from the chronology I have worked out for Goodner's life, that this must have been written from the narrow cell-like room in the Smithsonian, where the books shut out the light of the dusty slit-like window in the absurdly medieval tower. The last that I can learn about sand-hill cranes on my prairie is what I have heard from a man old enough to have looked at Lincoln in his coffin when it rested in Chicago Courthouse. In the seventies, he says, he saw a single bird and occasionally two and three together flying high above the city and making off to the north.

Already then the long freight trains were shunting on the prairie, and southward just over the horizon there were a din of hammers and an inhuman clash of metal where the steel mills were going up. And Timothy Goodner lay dead by Cape Mendocino, in sound of the sorrowful breakers, where west at last comes to an end, and there is nothing beyond America, our home, but alien east.

It had to be — the shrinking of the slough, the tilling and the fencing, the shuddering bang of the freight cars, the shriek of the mill. Many good things have come this way; there is no weariness now like the weariness of breaking prairie; children do not have to die, without a doctor, in the lonely house; there is no danger — and no hope — of loneliness. Mire and ague are gone. The wind blows dry across the clean, plain palm of Illinois.

But once it cupped the grassy sloughs, and treasured the hidden lake where the eel grass and the wild celery fed the waterfowl millions. Something went away, step by step, first with the buffalo, then the elk, then the prairie chicken and the clamoring, prancing crane — something that was ample and native and dark, like the first loam and the slough water.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The last great flight of the passenger pigeons recorded from the island grove took place when Rhoda's child Flint was ten years old. I know this because there is Flint's letter written to his Uncle Timothy in California. They found it among Goodner's papers, and it says: —

DEAR UNCLE TIM —

You ought to of been here to see the pigeon we been having. Mother says there was more the first year they came here. I don't see how there could of been. Bird and I shot till our guns was all hot. We been eating pigeon pie till we are sick of it. Peple came from all around lots we never saw before. Some boys that did not have any gun but pertended they did would pick up my pigeons. Uncle Am said there was plenty for everbody but he is always so easy goin. Old Milerand drove in his hogs the third day to get fat on the dead birds. . . .

The pigeons did not come every year to the grove, but only at rare and unforgettable intervals. They came when the mast in the Michigan forests gave out. Alexander Wilson calculated that a pigeon daily ate half a pint of acorns or beechnuts, and that a flock consumed 17,000,424 bushels in a day; Audubon makes it 18,000,000. Wilson said that he saw a column a mile broad, every bird in it moving at the rate of a mile a minute. He watched it for four hours, which means that, at his conservative estimate of three pigeons in a square yard, the ribbon of wings was 240 miles long and contained 2,230,272,000 passenger pigeons. This was but a single band, and of these birds not one to-day is living.

They are so gone that all we hear of them is fabulous. Alexander Wilson was standing one day at a pioneer's door when there was a tremendous roar out of the sky; the sun was so instantly darkened that he took this happening for a tornado and expected to see the trees torn up. 'It is only the pigeons,' said the frontiersman. Audubon saw a hawk pounce on a pigeon flight; the birds be-

neath it plummeted almost to earth like the funnel of a twister, and every bird coming after them executed the same figure, dashing into the vortex and by an unseen force shot out of it again. Everyone speaks of the roar of the wings; it ploughed the forest boughs into billows. Their droppings fell like shot through the leaves till the ground was covered with them, and the voices forever called upon each other. Imagine the tender contented throaty plaint of the barnyard pigeon amplified by a million voices to a portentous crying thunder torn with the speed of flight. Imagine all your county under forest and all that forest one vast pigeon roost; in such quantities they nested or they rested.

If the evidence lay only on the word of a few, it might not be credible, but the agreement among the skeptical and the rivals is too telling. 'The boughs of the trees were constantly breaking under the weight of the birds.' 'You could hear a pigeon-roost miles away.' 'The sun was dark for hours when they went over.'

They say that their wings flashed in the sun; the soft rose breasts, the delicate blue heads, the wings changeable green and blue and bronze, all had pearl-like lustre. The lustre is gone from the sad museum specimen that looks at a curious public with a glass eye. But there is Audubon's plate, painted from the life with every nacreous gleam of a pinion, and the dour soul who is embarrassed by Audubon can read the testimony of the cautious Wilson, who makes the pigeon sound as though Audubon's brush had understated it. Such a head-shaker may not want to believe anything that a mere writer would write, like James Fenimore Cooper, but he will have to accept the numbers and the might of the passenger pigeon when told of them by those who suffered from them and so could not love or extol them. 'The whole forest was like one vast chicken house; it smelled like it and sounded like it.' 'Sometimes they would be gone for years, and then they

would come back when the nuts were plopping. They would clean up the woods of everything edible and turn their attention to the farmer's corn. In an hour they would ruin him.'

I have just Flint's letter to go upon, and it would hardly make an item in a serious ornithological survey of Goodner's Grove, but Rhoda Goodner could not have heard the pigeons coming without feeling their shadow forecast upon her heart.

Hers was the last tragedy in a tragic summer. There was a saying that the first crops that grew so lushly from the virgin soil ran all to leaf, and that the grain was sick. At first the Goodners thought they had the 'bread sick' from eating the unwholesome grain, but they saw at last that the prairie, outraged and angered, was shooting down these mortals with its final arrows. From ancient boggy sod it loosed its malarial and enteric fevers so that Asa was doubled up with an 'ague cake' in his side. Patience was shaken with chills, and Timothy suffered then the injury to his heart that was to fell him suddenly in far-off foggy Humboldt County.

The mornings would wake enchantingly, a little dew still in the shade, and though the birds were mostly silent now, the flickers and the bluejays did their best to be musical for an hour. But by eight o'clock the world was already blazing and intolerable. It was an era in which cool and scant clothing was unthinkable, and will and stoicism surmounted the tortures of the tight basque and the ample skirt. But the heat drew iron wires about the head; the arrows flew. Elizabeth Millerand was down, two of her children were ailing, and Mary Tramble came and went with broths and possets and cherry-bark infusions. Only Delia seemed somehow magically untouched, more than ever radiant, more than ever absent from the house. Much of her time was not accounted for, and amidst so much sickness her comings and goings were not watched.



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THEODORE ROOSEVELT once called Chautauqua 'the most American thing in America.' To three generations the traveling Chautauquas and the Mother Institute at Lake Chautauqua, New York, provided the uplift, the education, and the entertainment they craved. **Gay MacLaren** (p. 441) was one of the youngest and most versatile of the Chautauqua troupe. She was a play reader, a mime who could act a dozen parts and bring an empty stage to life. She knew her fellow performers — Swiss yodelers, lady trombonists, and eloquent reformers — on friendly terms, and she saw at first hand the culture and glamour with which they were surrounded.



GAY MACLAREN

She was a little girl of seven in South Dakota when first she experienced the thrill of the Chautauqua, and it was a sight she never forgot. In time she secured from Mark Twain a recommendation as a remarkable young elocutionist, and an introduction to Bishop John H. Vincent, Chautauqua's founder. So armed, she secured her first engagement. For years she traveled the circuit, living and working with those memorable individuals whose names are bywords to thousands of Chautauqua-bred Americans. A further installment of her reminiscences will appear in the next issue of the *Atlantic*.

In 1923, **Mary Agnes Hamilton** (p. 452) wrote a short sketch of Ramsay MacDonald, predicting that he would some day be Prime Minister. Few took her prophecy seriously — but how right she was! Since then she has gone on to an ever-broadening life of public service, which has included attendance as a League of Nations delegate at Geneva and election to Parliament as a member of the Labor Party. She has been a frequent contributor to the *Atlantic*, and her enlarged and revised study of *J. Ramsay MacDonald*, published in 1929-1930 in both England and America, is regarded as the standard reference.

'I came West,' writes **Lillian Fryer Rainey** (p. 463), 'as the bride of a young lawyer who believed the greatest opportunities for success lay in the new State of Oklahoma. The town in which we

settled was alive with college graduates who, with sheepskins, marriage licenses, and the last prom programmes for heavy baggage, had come, just as we had, to make our fortunes. We were all on a parity. Few of the wives knew how to cook, but we learned. We burned biscuits, and our husbands hungrily and loyally ate them; we played Chopin and Beethoven, and they applauded; together we read Hardy and Kipling and Browning, and had the temerity to discuss style!' From her back door in Oklahoma City, Mrs. Rainey witnessed the phenomenal overnight growth of the oil fields, the economic and social changes wrought by oil, and daily was brought into contact with neighbors who were made or ruined by the black gold.

'There can be no orderly progress until the government first takes inventory of its vast and cumbersome self, until it determines what parts of it are to be permanent and what parts are not. When these questions are answered with definite and clearly defined policies that will be adhered to, then the questions involved in paying the bill will be met sternly, but definitely and with certainty.'

Thus cogently does **Senator Harry F. Byrd** (p. 472) sum up some of the primary problems which must be settled before we begin to talk of balancing the budget. As Chairman of the Select Committee on Investigation of Executive Agencies, Senator Byrd has been engaged in a study of ways and means of reducing government expenditures. During his term as Governor of Virginia (1926-1930), he instituted state economies and reduced the state debt with a success which is still remembered in the Old Dominion.



MARY AGNES HAMILTON

Catherine Drinker Bowen (p. 479) would rather play music in a friendly quartette than eat! She is the author of that cordial little volume which brings balm to every amateur musician, *Friends and Fiddlers*, and more recently she was co-editor of *Beloved Friend*, the letters of Tchaikowsky and Madame von Meck. A search for source material dealing with this same period took her not long ago to the U. S. S. R., where her democratic



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soul was momentarily captivated by the Soviet ballet.

An Irish poet whose fame is international, **William Butler Yeats** (p. 488) is a voice which still sings despite its threescore and ten. In May a new collection of his poems will appear, including, of course, the three in this issue. In the May *Atlantic* his Portrait, ably set down by Louise Bogan, will, we believe, form a notable addition to our series.

To remain dispassionate about so vital an issue as war or peace when rolling drums, even to the most optimistic, seem to be rising to a crescendo, is a task well-nigh impossible. Yet objective we must be, if we are not to be swept away in that hysteria so apparent in countries less fortunately situated. **Raoul de Roussy de Sales** (p. 492), American correspondent of *Paris-soir*, points out aptly that the problem is not so much that of war or peace, but of war *and* peace, because both eventualities confront us, whether or not we admit it. War and peace are indeed two aspects of reality as it exists to-day, as **Captain Dudley W. Knox** (p. 495) shows, in indicating the course America must pursue if she is to remain impervious to the ominous ferment in the world abroad. Captain Knox, now retired, was for some years naval editor of the *Army and Navy Journal*, and is the author of a number of studies of American sea power.

All young writers of short stories know **William Saroyan** (p. 504), an American born of Armenian parents who in his own work is capable of deep feeling, swift innovation, and delightful caprice. Readers will remember his 'Pomegranate Trees,' which appeared in the *Atlantic* for February 1938.

As European director of the Columbia Broadcasting System for the past seven years, **Cesar Saerchinger** (p. 509) arranged for America to tune in on broadcasts by George Bernard Shaw, Gandhi, and Trotsky; he supervised the technicalities which made Edward's abdication and the Coronation ceremonies familiar events in every household. The story of his life 'behind the mike' is told in his forthcoming book, *Hello America!*

Pursuing her campaign for fair and recognized identification of fabrics, **Margaret Dana** (p. 519) shows clearly what happens in a highly competitive industry such as that of silk hosiery where advantages and profits have to be reckoned in quarter cents.

Show us the horse lover who reads unmoved the story of Martha Doyle. It seems to us that **Richard Ely Danielson** (p. 523), former editor of the *Sportsman*, has written as blue-ribbon an essay as was ever laid on a horse's grave. The story will form the first chapter of a book dealing with his remembrances of sporting activities.

Just as we are going to press, the mail brings us this postscript from **H. B. Elliston** (p. 527), financial editor of the *Christian Science Monitor* and a most astute observer of foreign affairs: —

'Since this case study of diplomacy in no man's land was written, a postscript has been provided in Europe. Chancellor Hitler has wrung a "cold Anschluss" out of Austria. And Anne O'Hare McCormick, *New York Times* special representative in Europe, cabled from Rome, on February 21, that the general opinion of informed observers is that if "an understanding between Italy and Britain could have been reached a year ago, perhaps even six months ago, the Austrian surrender would have been postponed indefinitely." On Britain's part such an understanding, it is now revealed, has hitherto been blocked by the paralysis resulting from the dualism in British foreign policy symbolized by Premier Chamberlain, exponent of the Old Diplomacy, and Foreign Secretary Eden, exponent of the New. With Mr. Eden's resignation the world of diplomacy is more than ever advanced out of no man's land.'

With **Elsa Lanchester's** (p. 532) description of what it was like to beard Sir James Barrie in his den we conclude her account of life with her actor-husband, Charles Laughton. When Mr. Laughton first read the biography, he termed it 'the nicest husband-and-wife story I know,' and we are inclined to agree with him about its satisfying qualities. Later in the year, Harcourt, Brace and Company will publish the biography in book form.

One of the most promising writers of the short story in England, **T. O. Beachcroft** (p. 539) is beginning to make a name for himself on our side of the water. This present story is his first to appear in the *Atlantic*, and those who like its flavor are advised to look up his longer work, *The Man Who Started Clean*, which appeared in book form late in 1937.

The son of John Haynes Holmes, **Roger W. Holmes** (p. 547) graduated from Harvard College in 1926, and thereafter continued his studies at the University of Rome and the University of Berlin as a Sheldon Traveling Fellow. He took his Ph.D. at Harvard in 1933 and is at present Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Mt. Holyoke



LILLIAN F. RAINEY.



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College. He gives as his hobbies 'my family, teaching, chess, brain teasers, sailing, playing 'cello in quartettes, skiing, tennis, and acting in Dramatic Club plays.' Those who want to find him in his more serious mood should refer to his book, *The Idealism of Giovanni Gentile*, published by the Macmillan Company in 1937.

For the next *Atlantic* serial we have turned to a new theme and country, to the epic struggle which men — Americans, Irish, and Chinese — waged against the Sierras, the seven-year battle to lay rails over or through those majestic peaks. Here, in truth, is a California epic, and we know of no one better able to tell it than that native son, Oscar Lewis.

‘ ‘ ‘

Wilson Follett's article, 'Are Children Vegetables?' in the February *Atlantic*, aroused such wholehearted 'Yeas' and 'Nays' from all sides that we think readers will be interested in what Mr. Follett has to say about the steadily mounting correspondence provoked by his discussion.



CESAR SAERCHINGER

The correspondence has fallen thus far into four interesting groups of letters:

(1) the protests of psychologists and educators, outraged that a layman should be more impressed by what he sees happen than by their 'science'; (2) the plaudits of other psychologists and educators who rejoice when the ignorant layman says what they are in no tactical position to say themselves; (3) the corroborations volunteered by parents out of their own experiences with their children; and (4) the challenges of other parents who see with desperate clarity that, if you bring up your children on the system of ministering to their healthy demands for knowledge, you have them at the age of five mentally all dressed up with nowhere to go, the present state of the schools being what it is.

To the first group I am reconciled; for the second and the third I am grateful. But what really arrests me is the plight stated in the fourth, to which, indeed, my article was tacitly a preface. What is to be the relation of the keen, alert, normally growing child to a school system that presupposes lethargy and vacuity, bases its methods on the needs of the starved and the defective, and deals with the five- or six-year-old in such terms as, with a modicum of help, he outgrew at the age of thirty months? It is as burning a practical problem as civilization poses. As one of the tens of thousands of parents who have it to face for the immediate future, I mean to repeat and amplify the question I asked before: What are we going to do about it?

And from readers: —

New York City

Dear Atlantic, —

Mr. Follett, like Jane, verbalizes extremely well a feeling and a contention which educators of all colors and varieties have emphasized for a number of years. Modern educators' and psychiatrists' outstanding contribution to child psychology is this awareness of early contacts. Mr. Follett presents that aspect ably, but I think Mr. Follett exposes himself to the same criticism when he evaluates intelligence in terms of only one single technical acquisition.

There is this point which has not been discussed as it should be in the educational world: the profound influence of these early contacts and the effect of these early contacts upon the entire learning process. During these most sensitive years it is almost the universal practice to expose our infants to individuals whose contributions are limited to primitive habit formations, and beyond this their contribution is nil. Naturally this specialization would prolong and accent a phase of development which should only be preliminary to other interests. This is a serious question, because our contemporary culture insists upon divergent activities for the young mother which, if carried through, must needs relegate to others some of these elementary and important contributions. Actually we have involved here the question of the nursery school in our modern civilization as a desirable substitute for the limited contacts which even in our most privileged homes these growing children have been exposed to.

Sincerely yours,

EDWARD LISS, M. D.

Winthrop, Massachusetts

Dear Atlantic, —

What a 'tyranny of words' we should be compelled to live under in the next generation if all normal children of two years, to-day, had vocabularies of from 3000 to 6000 words! I think children know a lot more than Mr. Follett thinks they do. Perhaps these many children who speak only thirty-five words or less at eighteen months know that a great deal of the talk in this world is unnecessary chatter, noisy, enervating, confusing. Perhaps in their small, wise minds they know that many words are a hindrance to thought; that thought is born and nurtured in quiet; that in thought lies progress!

Mr. Follett would have us believe that the youth of to-day is a mutilated, dwarfed, and altogether ghastly thing, owing mainly to the all-embracing 'fact' that the parents of this generation are unintelligent. It follows, then, that if the parents of this generation are unintelligent the children had no intelligence to inherit, so there is no hope for them. It also follows that if we, the parents, are not intelligent our parents could have had no intelligence to pass on to us, and so on and on back down the generations. This is tinged, is it not, with the ridiculous. Any person with eyes and ears in his head can ascertain quickly enough the condition of our youth. Pass by any playground and watch and listen. Do you see 'mutilated organisms' coping freakishly with a 'hostile environment' and 'incapable of amusing themselves except by experiments in deliberate mischief'? Do you hear peevish cries

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and added attempts at expression? You do not! The youth, at least of these United States, is a healthy, happy, normal, and unthwarted thing. If we keep it as it is, we have nothing to fear, alarmists notwithstanding.

PRUDENCE PEASE GREEN

South Orange, New Jersey

Dear Atlantic,—

At the age of two, my small son approached his French grandfather saying, 'Grandpa, would you like to read the *obituaries*?'—handing him the paper forthwith.

Then one day when his grandmother discovered him scaling the heights of an old-fashioned bookcase whose lower drawer afforded a tempting foothold and asked, 'Where are you going, Donald?' he replied: 'Up, up, and up where the mother moon beams and the fairies are swinging.'

Not so indicative, but amusing, was his question when shown a picture of George Washington by Gilbert: 'Is that by George, Mummy?'

A. L. R.

The war debts as subsidies.

Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Atlantic,—

I was late this month in getting to my *Atlantic*, and when I did pick it up the first article that caught my eye was about war debts. 'What a coincidence!' I said; because not an hour before I had included a ten-minute discussion of one phase of that subject in a radio interview. It is true that what I tried to bring out was one of the ethical features which Mr. Elliston thinks it is only confusing to discuss; but that is not the reaction that has come to me from the broadcast.

My questioner was a Mr. Smith (really and truly), and after we had talked for a while on other financial aspects of world economic coöperation the interview went on as follows:—

'What else might finance do for economic stability and world peace, Mr. Cooke?'

'There is one thing our country might do, but I am sure will not. If we would write the advances we made to our war associates, the so-called war debts, off the national ledgers, that act would remove one of the obstacles to the resumption of sound international financing.'

'Why do you say "so-called" debts?'

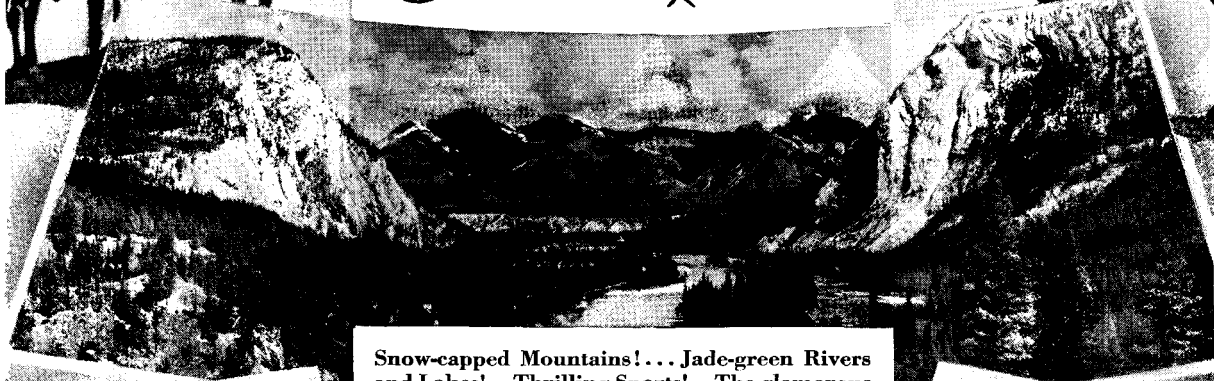
"Debts" begs the question. If they were debts, they ought to be paid; they were not debts, but *subsidies*. Have you ever looked up subsidies in history? They have been convenient weapons. France under Louis XIV subsidized England under Charles II. In the Continental wars of the eighteenth century, England subsidized first one side and then the other. We subsidized the European enemies of our enemy and enabled them to carry on until we could prepare and strike ourselves. That our subsidies also helped Great Britain, France, and other countries to victory did not change the character of our payments. They remained subsidies.

'It is a pity that after the war we failed to take a realistic view. We Americans pride ourselves on being practical, but we were not practical then. Now, of course, we realize that the subsidies are not going



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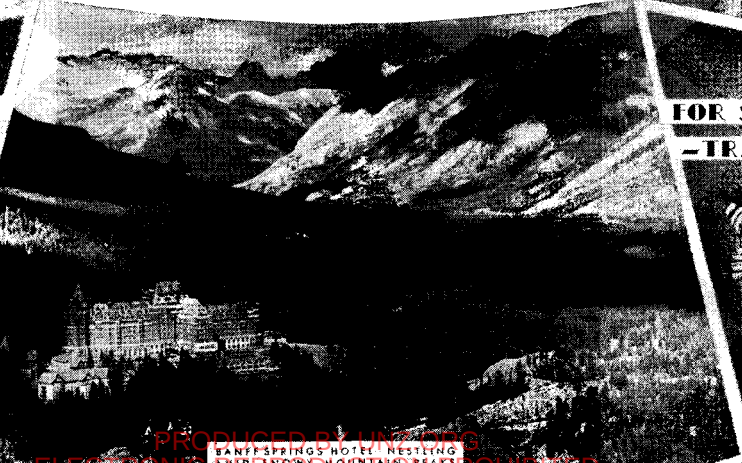
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to be returned to us in any material part. If we could only take the next short step to practicality and recognize that they never should be returned, who can say what that gesture might not do for world coöperation and peace? But I know that we shall not take it.

I should have omitted that last sentence if I had read Mr. Elliston's article just before broadcasting instead of just after.

Conscience does press, as the February 'Contributors' Column' said, and I hope the *Atlantic* will have more to say about what is equitable and what is practicable. I am encouraged to hope that we shall come nearer to justice than we stand now.

THORNTON COOKE

From B. L. T. to G. B. S.

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dear Atlantic, —

Why ask a Hibernian to be consistent? Is n't Shaw enough as he is? See an expert's opinion below.

HERBERT HARLEY

SHAW

LET critics chew your plays and find
Fit matter for their trade of whacking;
Let pundits analyze your mind,
And say that this or that is lacking;
For critic sass or pundit gas
I do not care a week-old cruller:
I only know that when you pass
This world will be a damn sight duller.

BERT LESTON TAYLOR

J. Donald Adams's appraisal of the state of the nation, 'The Collapse of Conscience' (January number), arouses a dissenter.

Hollywood, California

Dear Atlantic, —

Otherwise brilliant minds often become hopelessly befogged on the question of the American *mise en scène*.

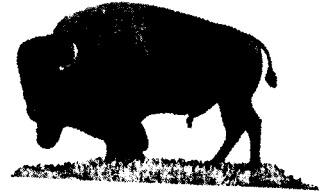
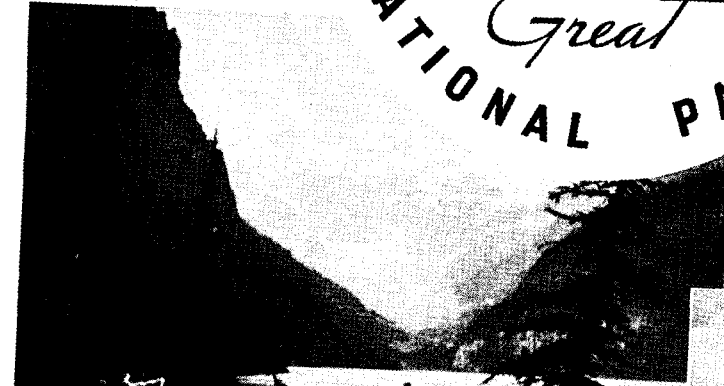
The people have been accused at various times of lack of culture, moral sloth, political incompetence, declining virility; and now, to mount Pelion upon Ossa, are accused of losing that 'still, small voice,' the Personal Conscience. Truly, if all their jeremiads were laid one atop another, it would be a modern Babel that would reach from the earth to the unsullied air of the stratosphere!

The 'Personal Conscience,' we are asked to believe, has been steadily submerged. Indeed, it has been supplanted by a new concept called the Social Conscience, which, to paraphrase our critics, 'costs nothing and sounds good.' Then there follows a list of so-called proofs of the steady deterioration of the American character that, if true, would be a diagnosis of complete decadence.

But after nine years of traveling throughout the country, from farm to city and village to hamlet, in nearly every state in the Union, I have learned that the moral code of the aristocracy has never been an index of the morality of the populace; that shameful instances of political expediency and compromise are not straws in the wind that presage the disintegration of American national character, and that a

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people who can weather the unprecedented depression of the last few years without a revolution, without wholesale riots, and without embracing either Fascism or Communism, is a nation that, far from having lost its collective 'Personal Conscience,' still possesses the 'Refuge of Reason,' without which no conscience, personal or otherwise, is possible.

ALBERT DE PINA

Praise for Saudin.

Levi, Ky.

Dear Atlantic, —

I am twelve years old and I had never read the stories in your pages but have enjoyed the travel section. So I was surprised to find the 'Story of Saudin' readable and I enjoyed it very much. Our March number came yesterday and I beat Mother to it to see what you have this time.

Will you please send the enclosed letter to Saudin for me. You can count on me as one of your faithful readers from now on.

Very truly yours,

WALLER BLAIN

P. S. By the way, do you have any more dragon's teeth?

W. B.

'The best government on earth.'

Republic, Michigan

Dear Atlantic, —

Like Mr. Sullivan, in 'Government by Mimeograph,' of the March issue, I regret that the government should resort to the use of propaganda. However, in a democracy sovereignty is forever disputed and contested. Will Mr. Sullivan explain how the government could maintain itself if it did not reach for the powerful weapons with which it is attacked? Does he think that the sober, prosaic truth buried in documents no one reads can suffice against the most comprehensive and best-organized campaign of propaganda to which any administration was ever submitted? In his own field there is certainly no such naïve reliance on the unadorned truth.

I regret the epithet slinging and name calling of which a few government officials are guilty. I find comfort in the thought that the officials did not start it. And for Mr. Sullivan there should be vast comfort in the knowledge that every epithet fired by a government official is answered in the press by salvo upon salvo, so that the welkin rings with constant thunder from Maine to California.

The charge of planned confusion in government reports of finances is the most serious he makes. The government certainly should not adopt the techniques of holding-company officials in compiling their financial statements. The ease with which their deceptions are detected proves that they are still bungling amateurs at it. Consummate practitioners of the art leave trails that a regiment of accountants and lawyers cannot follow.

I still believe that we have the best government on earth. A little confidence in our democratic institutions is, I think, quite as essential as confidence in business. There are weighty matters before us. I do not believe that the pot-and-kettle technique is going to prove much of a help in their solution.

GUY SCHUTTE

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Saga of the Sea . . .

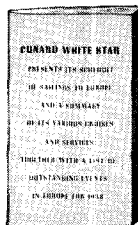
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A tribute to an Atlantic contributor.

Palm Springs, California

or Atlantic, —

memories of former Secretary of War

... days, after a Cabinet meeting with Wilson, it was the custom to adjourn for a large round table in the Shoreham Hotel. As I was passing the table one day I was invited to join the Cabinet members and meet the new Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, who was having his first day. Although they were joshing him a good deal they were all delighted with his bright spirit and quickness of return at anything that was tried on him.

At one point he said, 'I cannot get accustomed to the extraordinary situation of my becoming Secretary of War. I have always been an outspoken and almost fanatical pacifist. I came to my office at nine o'clock this morning and at ten o'clock I had to order one hundred thousand men to the Mexican frontier.' He turned to Houston and said, 'I don't know anything about this game. Do you?'

To this Houston replied, 'Yes, I have always been interested in military affairs.'

'Can you help me?' Baker asked.

Houston said, 'I don't know about that, but my Department can be of a good deal of help.'

'How in the world can the Department of Agriculture help the Department of War in a campaign?' asked Baker.

Houston said, 'To begin with, the water problems of the government are centred in the Department of Agriculture, and I'll arrange for our foremost water expert and a number of aides to go down to the border to see that water problems are properly handled.'

'Yes,' said Baker, 'I can see that is very important. Is there anything else?'

'Well,' said Houston, 'the supervision of meats comes under our Department. It is not only important that slaughterhouses should be properly watched, but the utmost care must be taken of the meat itself until it goes into the pot. I can send the chief meat expert with the army with enough aides to see that the meat supply is properly controlled.'

'Yes,' said Baker, 'I can see that that also is important. Is there anything else?'

'Yes,' said Houston. 'Our Department also has the supervision of vegetables and I'll arrange for the chief vegetable expert with some of his aides to go to the front.'

It turned out that the most serious problems down there were concerned with vegetables. The mothers of all the young soldiers, remembering the great mortality in the Spanish-American War when soldiers died off like flies in Florida, were very much concerned about their boys, especially since it was during the summertime. But with all this care which was given by the Department of Agriculture the young men went through their experiences without any unusual mishaps and came out in wonderful condition. The same organization was there at the time of the Spanish-American War, but it did not

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occur to anyone to use it. The principles worked out in this rehearsal campaign turned out to be of the highest importance in watching over the army during the great European War.

I had been in Russia during the first six months of the 1917 revolution. We had entered the war after I left home, and on returning in the autumn I stopped at several points to get some idea of the technique of the war. After visiting the British front and the French front, I went to the American front. Our soldiers had begun to arrive and plans were well under way for them to get into action. I saw much of General Pershing.

One day I said to him, 'I am leaving to-morrow afternoon at four o'clock to go directly home. I'll come to have lunch with you before I go, and please be thinking over any message you would like to have go straight to headquarters, for I shall be seeing the President and the Secretary of War almost immediately. If there is anything wrong, or if there is any special message you would care to send, be sure to let me know and I shall see that it gets to the proper authority.'

When I met him the next day he thanked me for my proposal and said, 'I have been thinking about it a great deal and I must say that I am amazed that things are going so well. My relations with the other commanders on the front are especially good. It might be that the people at Washington would be glad to have this message. You might tell the President that I am especially happy to be working under Secretary of War Baker. I have known all the Secretaries of War for many years, but I have been immensely impressed with Secretary Baker's ability and understanding. Before we came over here we had to present problems to him almost daily, but he never hesitated or deferred his decision and always when we left his office we said to one another, "Well, really that was the right way to decide the matter." Working with him in Washington or here is a great inspiration.'

When I arrived in Washington a bitter attack was being made on Secretary Baker and I felt it my duty to state publicly my own experiences at the front. My declaration made a great impression and I was called before Congress to repeat what I had said under cross-examination, with the final result that the attacks on Secretary Baker ceased.

All those who had personal contact with him, either through duty or otherwise, could not fail to understand that they were dealing with a great and righteous spirit.

CHARLES R. CRANE

A postscript to Arthur Pound's 'Housing: A Comparison,' in the February number.

Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Atlantic, —

My interest in housing dates back to my freshman year in high school and that same Model Home, which I visited. From that time I have followed housing — both here and in Europe — from Octavia Hill's plan down to the Greenbergs here.

I offer one possible, partial answer to the manufacturer's query, 'How to find ten thousand or a hundred thousand persons who will buy precisely that kind of modern shelter?' My hint lies in my



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having seen a piano's being regarded as an evidence of respectability in every parlor; then a bicycle's being a necessity in every basement; finally a car's being a *sine qua non* in front of every house lest one be thought queer. What can be done for pianos or bicycles or automobiles can probably be done, I suggest, for houses.

Just now we are car-conscious. We no longer say, 'He has a fine foundation for success'; we say, 'He is going places.' To create this attitude (or to induce it would be the better phrase) the automobile industry has been aided not a little by the oil, the cement, and the highway-machinery interests. Possibly the manufacturer might consider this clue.

Cordially,

LELIA BASCOM

Paging Colonel Ayres!

Keetley, Utah

Dear Atlantic, —

To show you how the fine and timely article by Colonel Leonard P. Ayres is appreciated, let me cite the following instance.

The February *Atlantic* was delivered in Utah the latter part of last week. While I was in Salt Lake City on Saturday, two friends went to great pains to urge me by all means to read this article, wishing to send me a copy if I were not a subscriber. On Monday of this week another friend, just after having read this article, called me up long distance to urge me to get a copy of the *Atlantic* for this article.

Very truly yours,

PAUL H. HUNT

If we could only make it wind-proof!

Richfield, California

Dear Atlantic, —

In the *Atlantic*, as in many of us, are latent powers.

Lacking a carpenter's square in making a V-shaped hog trough, I laid the *Atlantic* on the plank, with its top flush with the edge, and marked the cuts by placing a pencil against the back of the magazine and drawing lines across the wood.

When the edges of the two planks were lapped one over the other and nailed to form the V, the sawed ends joined in a straight line; and, with the end pieces nailed to them, the trough was watertight. Q.E.D.

ROBERT D. KELLOGG

A request.

Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

Dear Atlantic, —

In the Library of Congress is a collection of Sherman letters, which is sadly lacking in letters written by the late John Sherman. It is desired to borrow such letters, so that copies may be added to the collection permanently housed in the Library. If originals are sent, they will be copied and returned immediately, or added to the preserved collection, according to the wish of the sender.

Loans of letters are particularly desired at this time because a biography of Senator Sherman is under preparation at the Library.

Very sincerely,

JEANNETTE P. NICHOLS

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The Atlantic BOOKSHELF



A Guide to Good Books

WHERE will you find the distillation of Americanism? Some say Vermont, among them Elin Anderson, whose very human and accurate scrutiny of a Vermont town, when published in book form, was awarded the John Anisfield prize 'for the best book in the field of race relationships in America.'

WE AMERICANS

by Elin L. Anderson

[Harvard University Press, \$3.00]

ALTHOUGH I am no great one either for prize books or for statistics, I was taken with this book at once. For, *mutatis mutandis*, it could be my own New England town which Elin Anderson has explored the heart of instead of Burlington, Vermont. My town is an experiment in internationalism, too, and I had to speak Canadian French and be good at diplomacy in order to survive as a schoolboy growing up there. Miss Anderson has gone into the heart of a community, and she has found a good many things to set down that are reassuring to a believer in American democracy. She has implied many others that are still more so.

Usually studies of ethnic groups leave the human beings as such pretty well out. But there are a lot of human beings here. I got so I could almost call them by name. This serious and absorbing essay in sociology is full of voices. Hundreds of people are talking all the time, just the way they do on the streets and in their houses, not speaking pieces — Irishmen and French Canadians, Italians and Jews. And the sum of what they say is that America is a place where people can labor to be different and yet live together; keep their religion, their culture, and their prejudices, and still work out some common ideal of understanding, a live-and-let-live philosophy

which may well serve as an example to quarreling nations overseas.

Not that this book is a pæan. Far from it. It proves that the melting pot seems at the moment to be a myth — as it is, by the way, at any given moment; that antagonisms rankle; that the different breeds in a fair sample of an American city keep much to themselves in spite of chambers of commerce, unions, the amalgamation of different groups within the Roman Catholic Church, in spite of a common tongue, the Rotary Club and the Lions, Elks and Eagles, and such fauna, art, the theatre, music, the American Legion, the Alliance Française, public schools, a university, lectures, bridge clubs (contract can never kill out auction, thank goodness), in spite of marriage, charities, a common interest in the government, and even that leveler of all levelers — the movies!

The French Canadians of Burlington — who are often much older Americans than most of us Yankees, having been on our continent longer — keep to their trades and ideas just as they do in Brunswick, Maine. The people down by the water shy away from the academic lectures on the hill. Irishmen stand up like torches to rally the underprivileged just as Irishmen have always had the God-given right to do since they helped us to start — and finish — the Revolutionary War. The parochial school teams go into combat like Crusaders of the ninth century against the heretics who would defame their basket by tossing balls through it. And the Protestants fight like the hosts of Gustavus Adolphus. That's as it should be. The Old Americans wonder what the world is coming to, as the Italian and French Old Americans will wonder what on earth America is coming to when the Tibetans and Balinese Americans swarm up the hill to take over their houses two hundred years hence.



EDITH HAMILTON

Behind all this failure to coalesce is the American secret. That is why we are the interesting country we always have been, and why mass formations will never gather momentum enough to crush us all. The good worker and the lover of life will come to the top. A nation will go on in spite of narrowness in religion, in ideas on marriage, and in business. Adjustments to the changing world will be more easily made, as they have been made all through our history, and usually without bloodshed. And people from the four corners of the world will go on competing for life, liberty, and the pursuit of the happiness that makes me scorn to think the way my neighbor does on anything.

There is no easy or glib solution. No wholesale regimentation is possible in such a city as Burling-

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The BOOKSHELF

ton. We ought to thank goodness for that when we see what goes on overseas. Cultural and economic and religious differences will always exist as rightly as political parties. And the experiment in coöperative differences of opinion in the new world will come to a slow fruition. It has done so in most of the Northern states. Maine's 'Old Americans' are part Indian, part Huguenot French, part Scottish, Scotch-Irish, plain and hot Irish, part Moravian German, part Dutch, part English. And how good we feel being all these at once! It will be very strange if a few thousands of French Canadians cannot be taken into the family at this late day.

Miss Anderson makes one mistake: the chief reason why Vermont did not take that horrible road right the whole length of the Green Mountain range was that she thought too much of the Green Mountains.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

THREE GREEK PLAYS

by Edith Hamilton

[Norton, \$2.50]

MISS HAMILTON has chosen for translation the *Prometheus Bound* and the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus and the *Trojan Women* of Euripides. The choice was perhaps intended to appeal deliberately to a certain aspect of modern taste and opinion. The play of Euripides is, as the translator says, 'the greatest piece of anti-war literature there is in the world.' The *Prometheus* has been a sacred book for rebellious thinkers ever since Shelley. But one may doubt whether the *Agamemnon* is as pacifistic in tone as Miss Hamilton finds it.

The most interesting single feature of her method of translation is her treatment of metre.



EDWARD M. PICKMAN

The dialogue is put into iambic lines of varying lengths, normally of five feet. The choruses of two of the plays are in irregular, practically free verse which is predominantly iambic and anapaestic. In the choruses of the *Agamemnon* she tries to keep the exact syllabic equivalent of the Greek. On the whole, her

method is successful. The dialogue loses its strict metrical form and seems wayward at times; our careless ears hear prose rhythms where none were intended. But she has saved herself from any temptation to padding in order to fill out lines. Her handling of the *Agamemnon* choruses is remarkable.

The difficulty of obtaining an accentual equivalent of a rhythm based on quantity is notorious, and our English ears and tongues twist everything into iambs with the slightest provocation. But Miss Hamilton has succeeded with a minimum of license. Occasionally she finds it necessary to split a line to avoid two successive accented syllables. The result on such occasions is a short-breathed quality such as ruins many of H. D.'s translations. Actually to mark the accents might be a better way out.

Of more importance to Greekless readers than metres are the qualities of literalness and style.



JOHN BAKELESS

These versions are definitely more literal than any other verse translations with which the reviewer is acquainted. At times one might differ about the interpretation of a passage or find the verse form causing queer tricks of emphasis which prose would avoid. But the important

thing is that no ideas are added and the reader is justified in having confidence in the translator.

The style is plain. There is no straining for artificial dignity; the 'eftsoons' school of translation does not intrude. Nor has Miss Hamilton learned her verse in the school of Swinburne or any other outmoded hero. Yet, although this verse is plain, it is not prosaic. The language does not violate the emotional tension of the thought. It is not dull or flat. The imagery occasionally loses vividness, but English cannot reproduce Greek compound epithets. In any case there is here a minimum of that diffuseness that makes many translations of Greek poetry seem like the spinning of windy platitudes.

Miss Hamilton has done an excellent piece of work. One honestly hopes for more versions from her.

LAWRENCE LEIGHTON

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by a Professional Thief

[University of Chicago Press, \$2.50]

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The next chapter includes invaluable information in regard to ways of bribing police, and 'fixing' cases by employing crooked lawyers and politicians. There are some probably important tips as to the varying ease with which sundry types of theft may be committed in different cities. Finally the thief descants upon his social attitudes. Thieves' slang is used by professional operators among themselves in order that they may recognize each other and help each other. This usage enables them to avoid becoming entangled with bungling amateurs. A complete glossary of such slang is appended.

This book was annotated and prepared for the press by Professor Edwin H. Sutherland, who is an eminent authority on Criminology. It is published in the University of Chicago Sociological Series. We are informed that 'the editors are convinced that the textbooks used in teaching should be based upon the results of the efforts of specialists whose studies of concrete problems are building up a new body of funded knowledge.'

The reviewer feels that the readers of the *Atlantic* include very few aspiring amateur thieves to whom this textbook can be recommended as a guide which they ought to 'read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest.' He has a very strong conviction that the general dissemination of such 'funded knowledge' is at best folly, and at worst almost criminal.

Some of the native Australians have, as an important part of their initiation ceremonies for boys, the dramatic enactment of all of the most heinous offenses which it is possible for a tribesman to commit. The performance is carried out with gusto by the elders. At its conclusion they say to the boys: 'These are all of the things which you must not do.' It may be left to the reader to approve or disapprove this Australian method of education introduced into modern sociology.

E. A. HOOTON

THE MIND OF LATIN CHRISTENDOM

Vol. I, 373-496 A.D.

by Edward Motley Pickman

[Oxford University Press, \$5.00]

MR. PICKMAN is a religious historian, but not in the sense that Berdyaev is one. That is to say, he has not that passionate interest in religion that only the devout can have. He is, however, an historian of religion *par excellence* in that he is passionately objective — if I may perpetrate so glaring a paradox — in his scrupulous examination of the historical factors which in the later fourth and fifth centuries have made of Christianity what it more or less remains to this day.

This is no small matter; for most of our histories of Christianity have been written by theologians, by men who love their dogmas too

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An Open Letter to Jews and Christians

By JOHN COUNOS

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much ever to step outside of them — hence interpreting them by arrested emotions rather than by the knowledge that takes cognizance of time, the knowledge that distinguishes the legitimate historian from the theologian. Mr. Pickman, indeed, seems to have tackled his difficult subject in a mood reminiscent of his co-Bostonian, William James, when he said, 'Let's have less generalities and more simple facts.'

And that is really the admirable thing about Mr. Pickman. He has simplified and reinterpreted religious history in a manner that makes it palatable to the layman who would like to know but has been put off by such celestial metaphysics as exclude the average cultured reader from a world which should legitimately interest him. After all, such a reader, whether he knows it or not, lives in a world which is a superstructure of the world Mr. Pickman describes.

Most persons take their Christianity for granted. So they should, if it only involved the Gospels. Actually, the Gospels are a relatively simple matter when compared to the processes which began soon after Paul's conversion and did not cease for centuries thereafter. It took three centuries to put the final official stamp upon Christ's divinity. The centuries which followed, treated in Mr. Pickman's book (this is only the first volume), were devoted to developing a spiritual dialectic, designed as a method for answering uncomfortable and often unanswerable questions.

Many of the Church Fathers were, no doubt, zealous and honest men who had an inner need for satisfying their own inquiring intellects, and they built up systems of theological thought which, in a manner, survive to this day. Held up to the light of modern scientific judgment, their precarious balance suffers a jolt that is all but fatal. Not that science can answer those questions either: questions of faith, of omnipotence, of good and evil, of grace, and of what not.

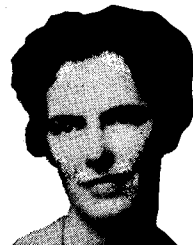
To take but a single aspect of a single question that bothered men in those early centuries and bothers men to-day, what Mr. Pickman calls 'the supreme delicacy of Christian doctrine: we emphasize God's omnipotence and His benevolence contracts, or we emphasize His benevolence and His omnipotence suffers.' Yet, as the author so well puts it, 'Through the effort to keep this paradox in equilibrium the Christian has been able to penetrate psychological depths of which no pagan had ever had any conception.'

It must be remembered that, quite apart from having to explain evil to himself, the early Christian was under compulsion to explain evil to the pagan. The value of Mr. Pickman's book is that it takes great pains to make clear the processes of thought and experience that have contributed to the making of Christendom. His great figure, of course, is Saint Augustine, and he would have all his readers read him. Yet I venture to say that

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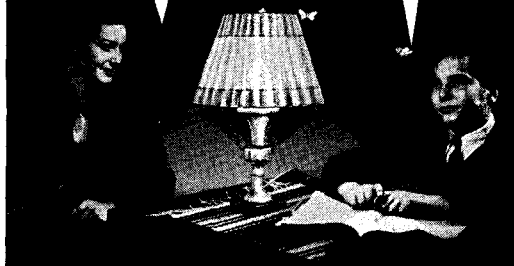
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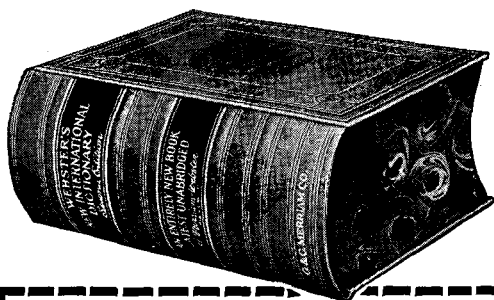


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many readers who will read Mr. Pickman will not read Saint Augustine, which is nothing against either.

JOHN COUNOS

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, THE MAN IN HIS TIME

by John Bakeless

[Morrow, \$3.75]

MR. JOHN BAKELESS, in *Christopher Marlowe, the Man in His Time*, has written a lively account of his subject. He has spent eighteen years in research and investigation, and he now gives us a full account of Marlowe's life; the background of his boyhood in Canterbury, his seven years at Cambridge, his brief and flaming career as poet and dramatist, his violent death. Mr. Bakeless has used to advantage the recent discoveries of Hotson and Eccles about various events in Marlowe's life, and he has added some minor discoveries, about Marlowe's Cambridge period, of his own.

The result is the fullest account we possess of Marlowe's external career, seen against the background of the external events of his age. In addition we have some discussion of his plays, of their sources and their history on the stage. Altogether Mr. Bakeless has written an interesting volume, one that can be enjoyed, on certain levels, by the general reader as well as by the specialist.

But for a reader who had expected a really serious and thorough treatment of Marlowe, this book will be a considerable disappointment. What matter are not the minor mistakes: Mr. Bakeless's apparent belief that Lucian was a poet, that the eighteenth century came three hundred years after the sixteenth, that Kyd wrote both *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Jeronimo* — slips like these can be made by anybody. Nor is it merely Mr. Bakeless's journalistic style, his too easy adjectives ('the spacious days of Elizabeth,' 'those bad dark days'), his heightening of his subject by various pseudo-jaunty devices — such things are perhaps pardonable when a man is trying to recreate a remote period, and in the hands of a mature writer they can be successful.

The trouble goes deeper than that. For Mr. Bakeless shows only the most superficial sense of literary values. It is an indication, in little, of his point of view that he should call Dr. Hotson's discovery of the true facts about Marlowe's death 'one of the *literary* discoveries of all time,' when actually that discovery, interesting and even exciting as it was, had nothing whatever to do with literature. As far as literature is concerned, it does n't matter in the least how Marlowe died; the facts are of biographical importance only.

What does matter, for literature, for a true understanding of 'the man in his time,' is an account, not only of Marlowe's life, his plots, his

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sources, the stage history of his plays, but of his craftsmanship in relation to contemporary tradition, his achievement in character creation, the relation of Marlowe's thought to the thought of his age. Mr. Bakeless touches on these things, but he never analyzes them.

The fascinating intellectual and emotional background against which Marlowe wrote, the profound and complicated welter of new and old views of man and of literature, the true nature of Marlowe's influence on Shakespeare — these and other essential matters Mr. Bakeless hardly mentions. His attitude towards his subject is external and superficial, and though we may be grateful for what he has given us, it is still true that a complete and satisfactory study of Marlowe remains to be written.

THEODORE SPENCER

THEY BROKE THE PRAIRIE

by Earnest Elmo Calkins

[Scribners, \$2.50]

THIS book interested me profoundly for four reasons. First, it is a conspicuous proof that history — I mean good history, sound history — is as fascinating as the best of novels. Whatever its subject may be, straight history needs no bowdlerizing to make it acceptable to a civilized taste, and still less does it need to be stenchd up with mephitic fiction. Mr. Calkins has taken about as unpromising a subject as he could find; he gives a straight, undecorated, unperfumed account of a communal life which at any point in its century of existence must impress the student of civilized man as simply appalling; and yet the history of that life, taken as a literary fact, is interesting to the verge of fascination. The test of an interesting book is the regularity with which one goes back and dips into it here and there for the sheer pleasure of rereading; and I believe Mr. Calkins's book will pass this test with any reader who deserves to be called literate.

Second, I was interested to notice that, like all sound history, this book starts up a wayward desire to know more about the details of its subject, indifferent or even repellent as the subject itself may be. I looked over Mr. Calkins's bibliography, and rather wished that life were long enough for me to waste a little of it, not only on the published books he cites, but also on reading the pioneers' letters, the memoirs, pamphlets, minutes of meetings, manuscript reminiscences, all of which he gives us now and then a taste. One would even like to go out there and examine the region which his book describes, to see the lie of the land and get a more vivid sense of its characteristics. These are vagrant wishes, certainly, but it is a great recommendation for a book that it should set such wishes going.

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Third, it interested me to find that Mr. Calkins has set a superb model or formula — I cannot imagine a better one — for any number of similar regional histories which ought to be produced. Until they are produced, in fact, I do not believe that any really competent general history of the United States can be written. I take it that, within its scope, Mr. Calkins's work is an astonishingly complete and workable handbook for the general historian. It indicates all his authorities, sets him straight on how to take them and what to do with them, spurs up his enthusiasm for his task; what more can a general historian ask of his specialists?

Imagine, for example, how inestimably valuable to the general historian would be the regional histories centring in Lebanon and Lancaster counties in Pennsylvania, and in Orange and Ulster counties in New York; or on the other side of the Hudson, in the counties of Columbia and Dutchess — provided they were done on Mr. Calkins's formula and with his extraordinary knowledge, as displayed in this book, extending to the most intimate minutiae of detail. In my opinion Mr. Calkins's greatest merit is that he has emphasized the supreme importance of regional histories in the most effective way, by merely giving a demonstration of it.

Fourth, I was interested to see that the simplicity and drive of Mr. Calkins's prose often slides him off into some pretty indifferent English, which for a rather fanciful reason — though it may be heresy to say so — I did not find objectionable, but rather the opposite. We all know how certain types of beauty are sometimes actually helped out by a minor defect or deformation which in another type would be a blemish. Brand Whitlock once remarked to me how distinctly, when Andrew Jackson roared in his mighty wrath, 'I know them French,' his bad grammar enhances the force of his words. Out of curiosity I straightened up a number of Mr. Calkins's lapses, and found that in every instance I had weakened his sentence; it seemed to be in the nature of his subject-matter that what he said was best said as he said it.

Mr. Calkins describes his book as 'some account of the settlement of the Upper Mississippi by religious and educational pioneers; told in terms of one city, Galesburg, and of one college, Knox.' Enough said — there it is. The book is just that. On the foregoing grounds I cannot urge it too strongly on the reader's attention; nor can I recommend it to him too highly as an incentive to serious reflection on the qualities and conditions, the principles and animating motives, of the regional society about him, wherever in America he may dwell. Such is Galesburg; such, essentially, is American civilization. Such is Knox College; such, essentially, is American education, both in theory and in practice. God help us all!

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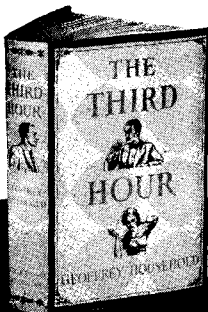
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On his release from hospital after the World War **Hervey Allen** took a trip on foot and horseback through the Shenandoah Valley; sixteen years later, on his excursions through his native Pennsylvania and down the Valley, something began to stir the blood of a novelist who was once an infantry officer. Mr. Allen had resolved that his next book should be about the Civil War before *Gone with the Wind* ever appeared.

Action at Aquila (Farrar and Rinehart, \$2.50) is a story of the autumn and winter of 1864. It is the story of Nat Franklin, the tall, amiable, burn-sided Colonel of the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry. Granted a furlough after three years of fighting, he spends some weeks behind the lines: visits his home town and is bored to distraction; visits Philadelphia and loses his temper; stays overnight with ex-President Buchanan, friend of his father's; and then on his lovely new mare, Black Girl, rides through the harvest country, through the Pennsylvania Dutch towns where his regiment has been recruited, to arrive at last at Morgan Springs, the summer resort of his youth. All of this is rather aimless going, a series of faintly nostalgic pictures in the detail of Howard Pyle. You like the Colonel, and, as the panorama unfolds, you see the resourcefulness and determination that held the Union together.

But at Morgan Springs Colonel Franklin has a close shave with guerrillas, and from then on the holiday is over. He rejoins his command, who are guarding one of the gaps in the Valley; he drills them against a threatening raid from Early, and temporarily he befriends a family of Southern refugees. There is an enchanting lull of Indian summer in the Shenandoah. Then the attack comes.

All this is told in warmly human terms, with the fascinating minutiae for which Mr. Allen has a collector's passion. I feel myself that he over-elaborates for dramatic effect; that he makes an innkeeper like Mr. Duane too windy; that the Colonel would not burst into tears at the sight of marching recruits; that no Southern commander would be quite such a damfool as Major La-Touche. Were this tendency confined to farce, it would pass, but the trouble is that the emotion is equally overloaded. And that is too bad.

For beneath the humor and tenderness and descriptive power of this novel runs a strong current of emotion which catches up the reader again and again. I think of the swift striding vitality of Black Girl, the Indian summer at Coiners Retreat, the rough compassion of Dr. Holtzmaier (a superb character); the ever-felt beauty of the Valley; the obliterating aftermath of the raid, and that extraordinary bit, Paul's image of his mother's slipper as he is dying. What a pity, then, that this current should occasionally leave us in shallows.

Edward Weeks